

**Silence at the End of the Rainbow:
An Analysis of the Effects of Rainbowism on
Post-Apartheid South African Cinema**

by
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A dissertation presented for the degree of
Master of Arts in African Cinema

Centre for Film and Media Studies

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2015

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in African Cinema at the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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ABSTRACT

If one reads a broad sample of interviews that have been conducted with South African filmmakers or film writers, then one might start to see a pattern in the types of complaints that emerge. Among these common complaints, one finds a widespread belief that the state is generally unwilling to fund certain types of films, and that contemporary South African audiences will avoid certain types of films. This dissertation explored whether the concept of Rainbowism could be adapted to theorise some reasons as to why the South African film industry seems to privilege certain narratives, whilst silencing others. A situation that is troubling when one considers South Africa's recent history.

To accomplish this task, the author did a vast amount of reading on the subject of Rainbowism in general and on post-apartheid South African cinema in particular. From these numerous sources a way forward was synthesised. Rainbowism was defined in terms of myth and counter myth and its role in the creation of a new post-apartheid South African identity was also explored. Following this, South African cinema was historically contextualised and the state film-funding environment was explored. This was done in order to see the engagement between Rainbowism and the various funding bodies.

It was shown that the emphasis on adapting to the post-apartheid state's neo-liberal economic policies had resulted in a situation in which film financing bodies such as the National Film and Video Foundation did not allow for audiences to grow in response to films. Rather, films had to be tailored to suit the preferences of existing audiences. This had a negative effect on those filmmakers that sought to try new things for which there might not yet have been an audience. Furthermore, it was also shown that South Africa's relatively peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy has become a feature of international co-productions; the desire to sell the idea of the rainbow nation has effected the types of engagements with the past that are displayed in these films.

This dissertation has shown that there is a gap between the principles upon which artistic creation in the new South Africa is built and the state's need to see economic investment at all costs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Martin Botha for his encouragement, support and most of all patience. I also want to express my gratitude to the staff at the CFMS department for letting me stick around all these years. Thanks also go to Professor Marx; Dr Smit, Dr Maasdorp, Simone, Jacques, Carlo and all the other lecturers and seminar leaders who were involved in the coursework phase of this degree. Many thanks also go to the African Cinema Unit; in particular Dr Ian-Malcolm Rijsdijk and Alta Du Plooy. Kudos and thanks also go to the MA and PhD students with whom I embarked on this journey in 2013: Clarien, Zethu, Norita, Carla and Kristina.

Thanks go to my family and friends for all the encouragement. Massive gratitude goes in the direction of my mother (the Virgil to my Dante) and father (Thanks Padre!) for all their love and support (both emotional and financial lol).

I dedicate this dissertation to my late cousin Felicity and the millions of other neurodivergent South Africans who continue to be marginalised and misunderstood in this country through no fault of their own.

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KEY CONCEPTS

Before continuing on to the main areas of analysis that are found within the chapters that make up this dissertation, it is necessary to briefly contextualise some of the key concepts. This shall be done in order to ensure that the reader is cognisant of what these terms mean when they are utilised in the pages to follow.

Post-apartheid: At its simplest, the term "post-apartheid" is an adjective that is used to place something chronologically after the first-ever democratic general elections of April 1994. These elections saw the African National Congress become the ruling party and Nelson Mandela become the first-ever black President of the Republic. The ascension of Mandela to the highest office in the land is generally seen as the official end of the apartheid period that had existed from about 1948 to 1994.

Dominant myth: "dominant myths" are modes of speech which emerge out of a particular position of political or social power (Reid, 2011: 3). The primary function of the dominant myth is the "justification" or "naturalisation" of an ideological message which those in a position of political or social power approve of and seek to disseminate in some way (ibid.). This conceptualisation of myth comes from Julie Reid's 2011 PhD Study. In that study, the term "myth" is used as a type of shorthand for "dominant myth" (ibid.). In a similar fashion, the term "myth" in this dissertation shall also occasionally be used as shorthand for the longer term "dominant myth".

Counter myth: "Counter myth" is a term that Reid uses to describe myths which "attempt to supplant the dominant myth discourse with an alternative meaning and one which is decidedly different to that of the dominant myth" (2011: 3). Thus while the dominant myth is often a prominent and well established discourse in a society, the counter myth seeks to offer a message of opposition in some way (ibid.).

"White" South Africans: Gary Baines argues that the past has shown that when a single national identity has been asserted, other identities have been precluded (1998: 2). Expressions

of a national identity are commonly defined by the group that is dominant in terms of political and economic power (ibid.). During the apartheid era, the dominant group was the white community as a result of apartheid system which ensured that the apparatus of the state and access to resources maintained solely in the hands of the white minority (ibid.). The white community consisted primarily of Anglophone and Afrikaans-speaking White South Africans of European extract (ibid.). Both of these groups defined themselves primarily in contradistinction to South Africa's indigenous black population but "they also distinguished themselves from each other through adopting a different standpoint to the 'other'" (ibid.) In this respect, the issue of "whiteness" was the primary factor that informed the creation of white identity, which ensured that race was a "salient social category in South Africa" (ibid.).

"Black" South Africans: Mistry argues that the communities that make up the black majority in South Africa were all equally oppressed by the same principles of apartheid because their status as 'non-whites' marked them as targets for the regime's apartheid policies (2001: 6). She notes that:

... the Afrikaner Nationalist Party did not differentiate ethnically among blacks (Africans) but segregated people within its own broad definitions of race. Recall that Indians and Coloreds were marked as such and entitled their own privileges, but still fell under the larger rubric of "black" (ibid.).

This dissertation shall not stress the differences in "blackness" which the regime forcibly inscribed upon people. Unless otherwise stated in the context of the text, the word "black" will simply refer to all the groups that the regime considered to be "non-white".

Rainbow Nation: The most famous descriptor of the new South Africa, it has become somewhat synonymous with the post-apartheid dispensation (Gqola, 2001: 99). Baines argues that Archbishop Desmond Tutu is traditionally credited with coining the phrase (1998: 1). Tutu spoke of South Africans as the "Rainbow People of God" in a number of television appearances and the terminology subsequently caught hold of the public imagination (ibid.). This idea of the "Rainbow Nation" is the primary identity myth of the new South Africa, one that counters older apartheid divisions that were based upon race (Van Staden, 1997: 49). Pumla Gqola calls the

"rainbow nation" an aspirational descriptor of how South Africans would like to relate to each other (2007: 112). In this sense, it is reference to a type of nonracialism because "rainbow nation rhetoric avoids reference to colour in the sense of race" and instead the colours are simply symbolic of South Africa's diverse and usually unspecified racial, ethnic or cultural groups (Baines, 1998: 2).

Rainbowism: A term that is often used interchangeably with "rainbow nationalism" and "rainbow nation". In the context of this dissertation, the term "Rainbowism" primarily describes the act of invoking the rainbow nation as a means of silencing dissenting voices on the state of the nation (Gqola, 2001: 99). The silencing of dissenting voices with regards to race and the apartheid past shall be one of the major sites of analysis going forward (ibid.). However, these acts of silencing are also sometimes unintentional. The reason being that Rainbowism exists as a type of nationalism and as Neil Lazarus has argued: "All nationalisms are therefore appropriative, since they all claim unisonance, and since these claims necessarily involve speaking for - and therefore silencing - others" (1999, 109).

Halo-period: The decade following 1994 which "was widely and affectionately referred to as the halo-period" (Reid, 2011: 362). It is the period in which the idea of the rainbow nation was reified the most through various South African films, television programming and other types of media.

1. Introduction

"[...] We are told that this is a country of miracles—the miracle of the birth of a rainbow nation. I wonder. Perhaps the greatest miracle in this country is how we have made silence an industry [...] people see things, they don't talk about them, and they get rewarded for their silence. When you look in the arts, the voices that are promoted are those that buy into this paradigm of a rainbow nation, which is really incarcerating because you cannot go in there with everything. You have to leave some things behind and be nice. That's what the rainbow thing is about. It's about making pleasant gestures. If your art has rough edges to it or recalls things that people want to drop off the national agenda, if your art operates outside of special containers, there is a problem."

- Kgafela Oa Magogodi (In McCluskey, 2009: 98-99)

This dissertation, shall attempt to explore the situation that Magogodi is describing in the above quote. The idea that the paradigm of the rainbow nation, arguably the most famous descriptor of post-apartheid South Africa, could be used as a means of silencing cinematic voices in a country with a constitution that "is universally considered to be the model for democratic governance" is definitely worthy of deeper engagement (Saks, 2010: 73). It is also important to explore any potential elements that might be negatively affecting the South African film industry, especially considering the industry's history of exclusion, fragmentation and role in propagating apartheid ideology.

The notion that the "Rainbow Nation" is invoked as a means of silencing dissenting voices is not a new one, especially considering that Pumla Gqola wrote about this problem of "Rainbowism" as early as the year 2001. However, the question of how Rainbowism engages with South African cinema in particular has rarely been examined in much detail. Magogodi's belief that adhering to this compulsory rainbow nation paradigm silences art that, "has rough edges to it or recalls things that people want to drop off the national agenda," shall be one of the focal points of analysis in the chapters to come. However, this dissertation shall not attempt to explore every manifestation or formulation of Rainbowism, it shall be confined primarily to questions relating to whether the invocation of the rainbow nation affects the creation of a more critical or artistic South African cinema. Furthermore, some of the case studies for this dissertation shall explore

examples of South African films that respond in some way to Rainbowism's attempts to obfuscate an aspect of the past, or the continuing legacy of racism in the present for that matter.

In order to accomplish this broader plan, a number of things shall be done in the chapters to follow. Chapter "2. Literature Review", shall contextualise the writings on the subject at hand in relation to broader scholarship.

Following this, Rainbowism shall be contextualised, what it means and the role it plays in South Africa shall be explored and a loose framework shall also be developed to guide the analysis to follow. This framework will be adapted from many different sources. This will entail Chapter "3. Rainbowism - Definitions"

Chapter "4. A Historical Contextualisation of South African Cinema" shall simply provide a historical contextualisation of South African cinema.

Chapter "5. State Funding in the Rainbow Nation" shall explore the various funding bodies in post-apartheid South Africa and the ways in which Rainbowism interacts with them.

Chapter "6. Suleman and Peterson: Against the Rainbow" shall look at the work of director Ramadan Suleman and his writing partner Bhekiziwe Peterson. Their films *Fools* (1997) and *Zulu Love Letter* (2004) serve as case studies of films which specifically act as foils to Rainbowism.

Chapter "7. Rainbowism and the South African Gangster Film" shall explore how the genre of the gangster film can be used to subvert the discourses of the rainbow nation in Ralph Ziman's film *Jerusalema* (2008) and reaffirm them in Donovan Marsh's film *Dollars and White Pipes* (2005)

All of this shall be brought together in Chapter "8. Conclusion"

2. Literature Review

2.1 Rainbowism

Many scholars have written about the rainbow nation and even utilised the term Rainbowism to describe similar forms of analysis as those which shall be found within this dissertation. However as was stated in the introduction, very few scholars have attempted to utilise the terminology of Rainbowism in an exploration of issues affecting post-apartheid South African cinema.

For example, Pumla Gqola, whose original conceptualisation of "Rainbowism" was a vital resource for much of this dissertation, located her work primarily in the realm of linguistics. Martha Evans essentially explored how television aided the construction of Rainbowism, while Melissa Tandiwe Myambo looked at Rainbowism in post-apartheid South African novels. One exception is Jesse Arseneault who utilised the concept of Rainbowism to explore the 2003 film *Proteus* for his 2010 Masters Dissertation *Races Among Men: Masculinity and Interracial Community in South African Cultural texts*.

Julie Reid's 2011 PhD thesis *A Theoretical Exploration of The Construction of Counter Myth: A Case Study of Post Apartheid South African Film* was an essential part of defining Rainbowism in the context of this dissertation. Her framework on myth and counter-myth informed much of the thinking on Rainbowism located in Chapter Three. Her definition of the myth of the rainbow nation as a counter-myth that denaturalised apartheid identity myths was a useful way of connecting various strands of thought in that context.

2.2 Post-apartheid South African Cinema

In Astrid Treffry-Goatley's 2010 PhD thesis, she asserted that the term "post-apartheid" grounded her study in a particular socio-political era and indicated her intention to "link the analysis presented to the overall workings of the post-apartheid state" (8). She claimed that "this integrated approach to cinematic analysis can be also linked to existing writings on South

African cinema" (2010: 8). *Silence at the End of the Rainbow: An Analysis of the Effects of Rainbowism on South African Cinema* shall attempt to do likewise and link the discussion on Rainbowism to the post-apartheid state. This shall be accomplished by looking at state funding bodies such as the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) and its Sediba Scriptwriter's Training and Development Programme. The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and DTI Film Incentive shall also be explored to a lesser extent.

Furthermore, Treffry-Goatley defined the goal of her study as contributing to the "existing body of knowledge on post-apartheid South African cinema" (2010: 9). Treffry-Goatley's qualitative and quantitative research, which added to South Africa's existing body of knowledge on South African cinema, contrasts interestingly with Litheko Modisane's approach in his 2013 book *South Africa's Renegade Reels: The Making and Public Lives of Black Centered Films*. Modisane's emphasis was not on "the location, and use of hitherto unknown archival sources, as well as fresh material, but on the application of a fresh analytical approach to a text-rich field" (2013: 11). This dissertation shall be utilising a similar approach to Modisane going forward.

While this dissertation is primarily exploring aspects related to South African cinema, it shall also be utilising a small amount of scholarship on broader African cinemas in the chapters to follow. The reason being, that some of the films that have been selected as case studies for this dissertation have similar thematic motifs and/or visual aesthetics to films which originate from African cinemas in the rest of the continent.

Therefore, this dissertation is aligned with a particular understanding of an assertion that Keyan Tomaselli made in his 2006 book, *Encountering Modernity: Twentieth-Century South African Cinema*, in that it was time for South African film scholarship to become "Africanised" (Cited in Dovey, 2009: 57). Dovey went about this task of "Africanising" scholarship on South African cinema by comparing South African films and West African films in her 2009 book *African Film and Literature: Adapting Violence to the screen* (57). This dissertation by contrast, shall be much less ambitious and simply attempt to utilise scholarship that was originally devoted to the analysis of Sub-Saharan African cinemas (Dovey, 2009: 57; Saks, 2010: 156). Alexie Tcheuyap's work on post-nationalist African cinemas will be very useful in this regard.

3. Rainbowism - Definitions

This chapter shall be exploring what the term "Rainbowism" means in the context of post-apartheid South African society. This will be done in order to begin to explore what effects it might have had upon the films that were made in this particular context. To begin this task, Reid's framework will be explored and then "Rainbowism" shall be looked at in more depth.

3.1 Dominant Myth

Reid argues that all types of myths are an integral part of human culture; they help members of a group to articulate the beliefs they share amongst themselves and to articulate these beliefs to the rest of the world (2011: 55). The usage of myths is a universal phenomenon amongst every culture, but every unique social grouping uses myths to protect or project different values (ibid.).

The "dominant myth" is generally accepted by myth theorists to be the ideological property of the portion of a society which holds political and social power over the other sections (Reid, 2011: 25). Therefore, the dominant section of a society is the group whose interests are served primarily by the dominant myth and its associated naturalisations (ibid.). To put it another way, the dominant myth discourse most often operates in service to this dominant section of society and it works "to justify and naturalise those structures which maintain the dominant group's position of privilege" (Reid, 2011: 26).

Thus in the context of South Africa during apartheid, the dominant section of society were white South Africans in general, because they held supreme political and economic power as a result of the apartheid system (Baines, 1998: 2). Apartheid ideologues subsequently sought to use mass media to disseminate myths that showed apartheid as the natural order of things (ibid.). Mass media was also used to try and justify the various privileges that white community had bestowed upon themselves on account of their "whiteness" (ibid.).

3.2 Counter Myth

"Counter myth", is a term that Reid uses to describe myths which "attempt to supplant the dominant myth discourse with an alternative meaning and one which is decidedly different to that of the dominant myth" (2011: 3). In this respect, while the dominant myth is often a prominent and well established discourse in a society, the counter myth seeks to offer a message of opposition (Reid, 2011: 3-4). This message of opposition is a conscious action on the part of a producer of the counter myth, someone who acts in the stead of a social grouping that finds the dominant myth incongruent with their own ideological leanings (Reid, 2011: 4).

Thus the counter myth seeks to denaturalise the types of representations that are found in dominant myth discourse and replace them with an alternate view of the world, one which is closer to the ideological positioning of the entity that initially created the counter mythical discourse (Reid, 2011: 4). Therefore, while the dominant myth most often serves as a tool for maintaining the status quo, the counter myth seeks to change the status quo and inspire readers of the myth to acknowledge the need for social change (ibid.). Furthermore, Reid asserts that because counter myth is often a catalyst for social change, its content is seen as political in nature (ibid.).

Reid argues that counter-myth is initially catalysed and brought into existence due to a feeling of "collective (though not universal) social discord among a certain group within a certain social environment towards a certain more dominant mythic discourse" (2011: 29). An important caveat to remember is the fact that there is substantial "inter-animation" between the dominant myth and the counter myth because one is not the binary opposite of the other (Reid, 2011: 166).

In this respect, the counter myths of the anti-apartheid struggle in regards to identity formation, sought to denaturalise the specific labels that apartheid had foisted upon people by reclaiming them (Gqola, 2001: 95). Gqola argues that:

The language of apartheid definition and control had always been challenged by the liberation movements ... The Black Consciousness Movement, for instance, recognised instantly that apartheid was predicated on division and the enforced legitimisation of these

disunities through language. Rejecting apartheid division and naming, it deconstructed 'non-white' identities and reclaimed 'black' as a racial signifier which united all those cordoned off into Bantustans or labelled 'Coloured' and Indian (ibid.)

3.3 The Counter Myth of the Rainbow Nation

Reid argues that myths are also based upon cultural values and can be a factor that influences or possibly even determines how people behave within a cultural group (2011: 79). In this respect, myths can be personal and manifest uniquely in the mind of an individual, or they can be seen on a national or cultural scale (ibid.). She argues that questions surrounding myth in relation to the nation are immensely important in regards to the post-apartheid context in which counter myth occupies an important function in the South African mass media (ibid.). She goes on to say that there is a "resemiotisation" of the South African cultural landscape taking place because the signs that the world knew apartheid South Africa by (and the signs it knew itself by) are obviously no longer relevant in a constitutional and democratic South Africa (Reid, 2011: 7). Thus new mythologies have been created and continually reified through media representation until they are part of the dominant myth discourse in the South African context (ibid.). These are myths that helped South Africans to rapidly reformulate and reinterpret "the national identities which were previously legally prescribed by an apartheid government" (ibid.). In this regard, Reid's study goes on to suggest that there is a second catalyst of counter mythical action (Reid, 2011: 330-331). She describes the situation thusly:

When a dominant myth discourse exhausts its power position within society, mythic descriptors of togetherness or of the collective (the nation) as well as mythic significations of the self and the *Other* must be reconstituted. Because such new mythic significations are in such ideological contrast to prior mythic descriptors they qualify as counter mythical, as they work to offer alternate or counter meanings to the mythic descriptors of the past, or a counter view of history (Reid, 2011: 311).

Therefore, counter myth in the South African context of the transition from apartheid to democracy shifted from a scenario in which counter mythical opposition took the form of combating dominant myths that were produced by a white bourgeoisie. Towards a situation in which counter myths sought to naturalise the position of the "newly empowered group" who achieved political power after the South African General Elections of 1994 (Reid, 2011: 331).

Thus Reid argues that these new counter myths do not simply perform mythical actions that disrupt the dominant myth discourses of a society, but “may also serve to encourage the social collective to function as a coherent whole” (2011: 332). One of these was the counter-myth of the Rainbow Nation which sought to denaturalise the identity myths that had been disseminated during the apartheid era and get South Africans seeing themselves as one nation (Reid, 2011: 331).

3.4 Tutu's "Rainbow People of God"

In this respect, Baines argues that South Africa's readmission to the community of civilised nations in 1994 was accompanied for a search for a new national identity (1998: 1). This fits in with Reid who argues that when an established order is overturned, through economic factors or perhaps a revolution, there is a need for the people living within the affected society to seek out a new conceptualisation of where they fit into the world (2011: 81). Thus after so many years of having one's social world and economic potential limited by apartheid conceptualisations of one's race, the country needed to reformulate what it meant to be a "South African" in a democratic and constitutional society (Gqola, 2001: 96).

According to Saks, this idea of the "New South Africa" needed "an act of immense imagination to bring it into existence and to maintain it, often in the face of insuperable diversity" (2010: 2). This "insuperable diversity" was found in South Africa's manifold peoples and cultures, all of whom had different experiential knowledge of the immediate apartheid past (Saks, 2010: 2; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Ndhlovu, 2013: 12). While post-apartheid South Africa had finally achieved some semblance of congruity with the first line of the Freedom Charter, in that South Africa finally belonged to "all who live in it, black and white" the question of how to bind these disparate groups together as a collective entity loomed large at the time (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Ndhlovu, 2013: 12). Martha Evans argues that the metaphor of the 'rainbow nation' was the most visible response to the question of how to build a new nation (2010: 309)

Tutu's symbolic usage of the phrase "Rainbow Children of God" helped to grant legitimacy to the idea of the rainbow nation (Myambo, 2010: 94; Gqola, 2001: 99). He had garnered immense

adoration from the liberal media of the world during his stewardship of the United Democratic Front and for his later role as the face of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation (Evans, 2010: 309). These achievements resulted in him being seen as South Africa's de facto moral conscience (Myambo, 2010: 94). Thus it was not hyperbolic when William Gumede wrote that Tutu's usage of the rainbow nation imagery "bestowed divineness on South Africa's ethnic diversity" (2005: 242).

Gqola argues that Tutu's usage of the rainbow nation analogy was powerful in its symbolism as it did not attempt to deny that South Africans were different from each other, rather it was premised upon his belief that all South Africans could co-exist in peace and harmony in spite of and because of these differences (2001: 99). The democratic dispensation of the new South Africa with its liberal constitution made this type of understanding of nationhood an actual possibility for the first time in South African history (ibid.). Gqola argues that South Africa's liberal constitution, was a founding document that allowed South Africans to project an idealised image of the South African society that would exist if everybody was a paragon of their best selves (2007: 112). In this respect, the constitution was an aspirational document in much the same way that Tutu's expression of South Africans as the "Rainbow People of God" was an aspirational descriptor (ibid.). Gqola asserts that a hope-giving aspirational label such as the "rainbow nation" occupied a similar role as the provisions of the constitution, in that it was hoped that such a labelling process would "bring us closer to the society described in both" (ibid.). Thus the label of the "rainbow nation" like the constitution is about "how we should relate to one another, what we should be able to assume and invest in one another" (ibid.)

Writing in 1997, Christo Van Staden argued that the "Rainbow Nationalism" that was emerging at the time could be seen as discourse specifically meant to counter older forms of nationalism that had emerged during and as a result of the apartheid system (49). Thus Rainbow Nationalism acted as a counter to nationalist discourses such as Afrikaner nationalism which excluded the majority of South Africa's population (ibid.). Rainbow Nationalism was not only a discourse that countered myths of white nationhood, but other nationalist discourses that contained segregationist aspects, such as a particular conceptualization of Zulu nationalism which sought a separate Zulu Kingdom in the old apartheid homeland of Kwazulu (ibid.). Therefore, the

emphasis on the metaphor of the rainbow nation was an attempt to move away from a type of primordial nationalism that was founded upon notions of linguistic and cultural purity (Evans, 2010: 309).

3.5 Nelson Mandela and the Rainbow Nation

Myambo argues that "Nelson Mandela quickly adopted Tutu's "rainbow nation of God" terminology as the sentiment behind it was an extension of the African National Congress's "non-racialism"" (2010: 94). Evans asserts that the mythology of what she also refers to as "rainbow nationalism" became equally, or perhaps even more synonymous with Mandela, whose "own mythology became intertwined with that of the „new“ nation" (2010: 309). Mandela's decision to preach forgiveness and reconciliation, as opposed violent retribution after his release from prison, added to the global popularity that he had acquired as a result of the anti-apartheid movement turning him into one of the focal points in the struggle against apartheid. Evans highlights how the rainbow not only acted as a symbol of South Africa's multi-ethnic and multicultural population, but it also links to the well-known Biblical story of Noah and the flood, in which the "rainbow served as a sign of God's oath never to wreak vengeance on humanity again" (ibid.). Thus it is not inconceivable to assume that a country with a majority Christian population would associate the metaphor of the rainbow used by Tutu and Mandela with the biblical narrative in which the old had passed away and the new had come (ibid.).

Evans puts forth the proposition that the establishment of rainbow nationalism is heavily indebted to the mass media, with the medium of television in particular providing the public with three compelling televised displays of the new national identity (2010: 310). She contrasts South Africa's rainbow nationalism with the type of American nationalism that D.W. Griffith's film *The Birth of The Nation* (1915) utilised in its attempts to codify American national identity through the mythologisation of its recent history (ibid.). Evans argues that rainbow nationalism is different to the types of nationalism found in American mass media texts like *The Birth of The Nation* because it sidesteps South Africa's indelibly painful past by continually refocusing attention upon the present (ibid.). Rainbow nationalism also gained immense traction through three live broadcasts that all featured Nelson Mandela (ibid.).

The first television event was Nelson Mandela's release from prison in 1990 to cheering crowds whilst he walked hand in hand with his wife, the popular struggle veteran, Winnie Mandela (ibid.). The second important televised event was Mandela's inauguration as the first post-apartheid President of the Republic (ibid.). Mistry asserts that "The Rainbow Nation" campaign was in full-swing at this event because the ceremony contained cultural representations from every section of the population (2001: 9). White people, Indian people and Coloured people thus had equal and proportional representation in relation to the "various African ethnic denominations" (ibid.). Mistry summarises the choice of representations as timely, as it was important:

... to represent the good faith of negotiated politics in the new South Africa; abating the fears of minorities and sealing the promise of a peaceful transition to a free and democratic situation. This ideological ethos permeated the rest of Mandela's office with symbolic displays of this at sports events, arts and cultural occasions (ibid.).

The most prominent display of rainbow nationalism was found in the third televised event, Nelson Mandela's appearances at the opening ceremony and final match of the 1995 Rugby World Cup which South Africa hosted (Mistry, 2001: 9; Evans, 2010: 310). The image of a beaming Nelson Mandela wearing the Number 6 Jersey of Springbok Captain Francois Pienaar, as he handed the trophy over to Pienaar in the wake of South Africa's victory in the final match against New Zealand, became world famous (Evans, 2010: 310; Arseneault, 2013: 38). The events of the Rugby World Cup would later get the Hollywood treatment through Clint Eastwood's 2009 film *Invictus* starring Morgan Freeman as Nelson Mandela and Matt Damon as Francois Pienaar (Arseneault, 2013: 38). According to Arseneault, the film served to "glorify the nonracialism of Mandela as he selflessly overlooked a history of racism in support of the Springboks" and possibly "obscured the nuances of the post-Apartheid nation state's many challenges, of which racial tensions were one of many " (ibid.).

Evans argues that these three television broadcasts helped to make the country look unified and stable, a vital step that was conducive to bringing the South African economy back to life (2010: 310). The South African economy had been somewhat excluded from the global economy

through economic sanctions and various boycotts and as a result the new government desperately needed capital investment (Saks, 2010: 1; Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 3). Furthermore, Evans asserts that these televised events helped to garner popular support for the style of transition the ANC leadership had decided upon (2010: 310).

Baines argues that the discursive construction of this new identity took place through the media and "other forums of public discourse" (1998, 3). The public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) also assumed some responsibility for the national unity of the country as every advertisement break in programming brought forth the repetitive jingle: "Simunye - We are one" as a testament to the nation's unity (ibid.). He goes on to say that:

The content of certain radio and television programmes, and even some private sector funded advertisements convey the message of nation building. For instance, South African Breweries who are the chief sponsors of the national soccer team (the Bafana Bafana) have promoted Castle Lager with the slogan "One Beer, One Nation". As cultural carriers, the media have been crucial in disseminating the rhetoric of 'Rainbowism' (ibid.).

This public rehearsal of unity through sports has continued well into the post-apartheid context, with televised sporting events playing an integral role in constructing a perception of national unity (Gqola, 2001: 100). Rugby union, cricket and association football are all co-opted into creating an image of unity, usually through the camera focus on mixed spectators who join together as one to sing the South Africa's hybrid national anthem and get behind a common cause (Gqola, 2001: 100-101).

3.6 Rainbowism and Nonracialism

Evans argues that the displays of a reconciled national identity from this period could also be seen as a facade that did not do much to dismantle the massive structural inequalities wrought by the apartheid system (2010: 310). Thus the images from this era seemed to suggest that the new nation was a finished product, an occurrence which disguised a number of the era's significant contradictions and shifted attention away from difficult implications that emerged from achieving political reform without socio-economic reform (ibid.).

This ties into Pumla Gqola's conceptualisation of "Rainbowism" which she defined as a series of "intertwined and competing processes" (2001: 99). She asserts that continual invocation of South Africa as the rainbow nation, may have helped to build a collective national identity that counters the older colonialist and apartheid ways of defining the self in relation to the other, but it also prevents a thorough examination of the intersectionality of race and power in the new South Africa (Gqola, 2001: 103). Gqola asserts that Rainbowism became less progressive as time went on, as it became "an authorising narrative which assisted in the denial of difference" (2001: 99).

The reason for this is found if one looks deeper at image of the rainbow as a primary descriptor of the South African people, Gqola believes that "within the boundaries of Rainbowism there exist a series of possibilities that (potentially) rupture the ideal" (ibid.). The use of this metaphor results in various forms of ethnic and cultural diversity being conceptualised as having their place on the metaphorical spectrum of light (ibid.). The boundaries between colours in this imaginative construct are subsequently blurred in terms of difference and the various distinctions between each colour grouping become fluid (ibid.). However, Rainbows are also fleeting and perpetually out of the reach of those who chase them, as the metaphor of "chasing the rainbow" attests (ibid.). Gqola adeptly summarises the contradictions of Rainbowism thusly:

The metaphor of the rainbow people is hailed as a celebration of unity and the successes of a post-apartheid dispensation. Yet its benefits continue to elude, slip and mock. It rejects transparency and its constitutive meanings constantly undercut each other. It foregrounds difference at precisely the moment during which it trivialises its implications. Thus, an interrogation of its connotations yields no definitive answers. It simultaneously leads everywhere and nowhere, is helpful and dangerous because even as it asserts its presence, it signifies absence (2001: 110)

Gqola argues that being counted amongst these rainbow people thus implies that one has an equal opportunity for wealth acquisition, or has "equal access to the mythic pot of gold" as she phrases it (2001: 100). However, the reality is that even in a democratic South Africa the continuing economic legacy of the apartheid system prevents many black South Africans from attaining their pot of gold at the end of the rainbow (ibid.). Thus Gqola argues that Rainbowism works as a means of silencing any attempts to highlight the readily apparent differences in economic power that continue to manifest in South African society (ibid.). Even with

government mandated attempts at redress, there remains substantial economic disparity between those who the apartheid regime considered "white" and those that the regime considered "non-white" (ibid.) Rainbowism thus helps obscure the fact that "[m]ost of the economic elite is white (which is not the same as saying that most whites are in the economic elite), and most [black] Africans are poor" (MacDonald, 2006: 4)

A potential reason for this is found in the way that the nonracialism of the rainbow nation ideal has been deployed when a situation calls for the emphasis of a type of non-racialism, but not necessarily a form of anti-racism (Gqola, 2001: 99-100). In this context, references to post-apartheid South Africa as the rainbow nation would generally accompany the statements of those who claim not to see race. Achille Mbembe argues that the fact that the ANC failed to turn white guilt about apartheid:

... into a moral debt ... has let the most reactionary sectors of white society off the hook while chasing away those progressive and antiracist whites who could have supported the idea of a radical transformation of the society (2014: online resource).

Mbembe argues that conservative and reactionary elements in South African society have co-opted nonracialism and now equate it with a form of colour-blindness, while also mobilising the discourse of "nonracialism to silence those who point to any trace of racism in the present, or call for some form of reparation for the injustices of the past" (2014: online resource). When one considers that white South Africans did not have to give up anything after the political change to democracy, or pay any kind of reparations as the Germans had to after the Second World War, it becomes possible to argue that the deployment of the rainbow nation becomes a means of shutting down debates on whether the status quo is truly just as it currently stands (ibid.). However, it is also important to remember that Rainbowism or rainbow nationalism is not in and of itself a problem, Stuart Hall said that nationalism:

... isn't necessarily either a reactionary or a progressive force, politically ... It is capable of being inflected to very different political positions, at different historical moments and its character depends very much on the other traditions, discourses and forces with which it is articulated. (1993: 355)

Therefore, while some regroups in post-apartheid society might have interpreted the nonracialism inherent in the myth of the rainbow nation as a means of silencing debate on the continuing effects on the past on South African society. This type of side effect was obviously not the intention that Tutu and Mandela had when they adopted the rainbow nation as one of the primary identity myths of the new South Africa (Evans, 2010: 323).

3.7 The Rainbow Nation after the Halo-Period

Since the new millennium, the idea of the new South Africa as a country that was "alive with possibility" (as the popular slogan went) has become somewhat tarnished (Saks, 2010: 14). This is because the heady idealism that characterised much of the halo-period faded in the wake of trying to fix the enormous problems that were left over from the apartheid era (Saks, 2010: 14). Treffry-Goatley asserts that South Africa was in a dire financial situation in the immediate post-apartheid era because three and a half centuries of racial hatred and systematic violence had not only resulted in a profoundly ailing national psyche, but also a colossal lack of state capacity in terms of financial and administrative competence (2010: 3).

Saks argues that even though the ANC restructured the South African economy in accordance with neo-liberal frameworks and the various demands of global capital, "investment has not flowed into the country" and "unemployment is at catastrophic levels" (Saks, 2010: 14). In addition to this, "privatization has diminished the power of the state to provide a safety net for the poor and the sick" (ibid.). South Africa has also continued to be one of the world's most unequal societies along with Guatemala and Brazil (ibid.). The HIV/AIDS pandemic has also decimated the most active demographic of society, those between the ages of 18 and 42 (ibid.). Evans argues that the "current context, dominated by tense race relations, uprisings against lack of service delivery, increasing inequality and ongoing white emigration, suggests that the rainbow nationalist period may have inadvertently helped to defer rather than deflect revolution" (2010: 323).

Reid argues that the Halo-period had ended by around 2004, and in that same year Gqola noted a perceived shift in "public parlance" as though South Africa had started to move away from the

emphasis on unity and towards new ways of defining "South Africanness" (Gqola, 2004: 6; Reid, 2011: 362). Gqola argues that the continual media references to South Africa in the rainbow nation, had served to get South Africans seeing themselves as the rainbow nation and describing themselves in that way (2004: 6). This was part of the aforementioned aspirational quality that was attached to the label of the rainbow nation, thus as Gqola notes:

In the 10th year of South Africa's democracy, "rainbow nation" has disappeared almost entirely from public parlance. It is possible that at the precise moment we perceived ourselves as achieving "rainbow nation" status, its assertion became redundant. While the media had given us little reprieve from declarations of "rainbow nation" citizenship, the dominant trend now points to their apparent commitment to uncovering the textures of that status (ibid.)

The absence of rainbow nation discourse in "public parlance" possibly signals that the counter myth of the rainbow nation succeeded to some extent at denaturalising the dominant myths around national identity that were leftover from the apartheid era. Thus it might be possible to see Rainbowism as having become the new dominant myth in the post Halo-period context and one that new counter myths will seek to work against, or change in some way going forward (Reid, 2011: 362).

3.8 Rainbowism and Film

Thus Rainbowism can be seen as an important factor in the creation of post-apartheid South African national identity, in the paragraphs above it was detailed how television and other forms of media helped to continually reify the counter-myth of the rainbow nation. A myth which denaturalised apartheid-era conceptualisations of "the self" and "the other" through a focus upon the contemporary diversity of South Africa's rainbow people, instead of a focus upon the horrors of the racialised past (Evans, 2010: 310; Reid, 2011: 311). Reid notes how the myth of the rainbow nation has been disseminated across a variety of media and has thus assumed a multifaceted form (2011: 142).

This is an appropriate point to begin an exploration of Rainbowism in relation to South African cinema. Maingard argues that the cinema is of crucial importance in relation to ideas of

nationhood and citizenship because the cinematic medium has the potential to "both shape and reflect our perceptions" on these subjects (2007: 3). In the modern era, the "collective" is defined mostly in terms of the nation; therefore it makes sense to explore what effects Rainbowism as a type of nationalism has had upon South African cinema (Reid, 2011: 183). Furthermore, by looking at how the nation is representing itself (or what it is not representing for that matter), one can tell a great deal about its cultural priorities and the artistic health of the society. Reid asserts that South African cinema in a democratic South Africa has the potential to not only present the changes within society, but put forth ways of easing the transition (2011: 184). She quotes Botha who argued that:

One can argue that film is an important part of the cultural domain in any country, but particularly so in South Africa where social change depends on the *quality* of communication in the society. Communication is one of the cornerstones of democracy, and film and video can make an important contribution to the democratisation and development that need to take place within this society ... as forms of popular fiction, films and videos such ... can explore the changes taking place in South Africa in a way that helps people to make sense of these dramatic changes (2002: online resource).

Therefore, if Rainbowism was being continually invoked in the halo-period in order to try and get South Africans seeing themselves as a collective group, a task that would surely help with a form of social cohesion. Then it follows that Rainbowism would most likely manifest in the films that the country made as well as in the broader filmmaking context. The myth of the rainbow nation finds cinematic representation and reification predominantly in comedy films; such as *White Wedding* (2009), *Jozi* (2010) and *Fanie Fourie's Lobola* (2013) as well as the very popular work of comedian Leon Schuster (Reid, 2011: 142; Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 110). Various culture clashes between diverse peoples generally make up much of the humour in these films. However, due to length constraints this dissertation shall not be engaging with comedy films as case studies, instead focus shall be shifted towards those films that engage with Rainbowism through the perspective of the drama film.

4. A Historical Contextualisation of South African Cinema

Any discussion on South African cinematic culture needs to be premised by a historical contextualisation, Masilela asserts this much when he says that "making sense of the country's film culture requires an awareness of the intellectual movements that informed its early reception and practice" (2003: 15).

A useful starting point is Botha's assertion that the focal problem of South African Cinema over the years is the way in which the medium has almost always been seen in terms of its commercial value as opposed to its value as a disseminator, as well as an expression, of culture (2012: 159). He argues that film should not only be seen in terms of its commercial viability but also as a "product of culture, such as indigenous literature, theatre, the plastic arts and music" (ibid.).

The earliest film projection devices had arrived in the Johannesburg goldfields as early as the year 1895 (Botha, 2012: 11). While South Africa's significant documentary tradition can be traced back to the year 1896 and the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 (Botha, 2012: 9). In 1913 the real estate and insurance tycoon, Isadore William Schlesinger, formed African Amalgamated Theatres' Trust, Ltd. and proceeded to establish a monopoly over practically every aspect of South African cinema (Saks, 2010: 11). The Schlesinger Empire's domination remained almost completely unchecked from 1913 to 1956, barring a temporary loss of control when sound films were initially introduced to South Africa (Botha, 2012: 26).

By the 1930s the global dominance of Hollywood Product had resulted in a substantial diminishment of South African film production (Botha, 2012: 11; Saks, 2010: 12). South African productions gained newfound popularity after the release of *Sarie Marais* and *Moedertjie*, the first South African films with sound, in 1931 (2012: 26). Audience growth corresponded with the ascendancy of Afrikaner nationalism in the wider country, thus nationalist themes and motifs grew more and more conspicuous with every new Afrikaans language-film that was released (Botha, 2012: 29). While there was a boost in the popularity of South African cinema as a result

of the arrival of the sound film, the majority of films that were being screened in the country during this period were predominantly of American origin (Botha, 2012: 29).

Censorship was a major problem in these early days; in 1930 an Entertainments censorship bill was introduced to South Africa which enabled the state to control the advertisement and exhibition of films in the country (Botha, 2012: 30). The bill also provisioned for the creation of a national board of censors, from whom approval had to be sought before any film or advertisement for a film could be shown publicly (Botha, 2012: 30-31). In this respect, South African cinema in the first few decades of its existence had to compete with Hollywood products for screen time and when local films were made they often had to utilize nationalist conventions and themes in order to get local audiences to pay attention. Added to this debacle local filmmakers had to avoid getting on the bad side of the censorship board.

Schlesinger's domination of the industry only ended in 1956 because the famed Hollywood company Twentieth Century Fox bought out the Schlesinger's cinematic Empire (Botha, 2012: 11). The local film industry also received a boost when director Jamie Uys was able to convince the nationalist party government to provide a financial subsidy to help in the creation of local films (Botha, 2012: 11-12). A regulated subsidy system was introduced around 1956 (Botha, 2012: 12) This action may have helped to spur the growth of the local industry but in the long run it also lead indirectly to the intense fragmentation of the industry (Botha, 2012: 11-12). The introduction of this subsidy system was the start of a period of collaboration between big business and government with the express purpose of manipulating cinema in South Africa to serve ideological purposes (Botha, 2012: 12).

By the 1960s, the local film industry was predominantly one in which Afrikaans productions had pride of place (ibid.). The white Afrikaans audiences of the day, who had been economically uplifted as a result of various apartheid machinations, was sufficiently large and monolithic enough to ensure that so long as a film "provided light entertainment and dealt with Afrikaner reality and beliefs" then it would earn enough money to break even (ibid.).

Segregationist laws and other forms of structural racism up to this point had resulted in the wholesale exclusion of black South Africans from practically every meaningful aspect of the film industry (Botha, 2012: 35). Even though the cinema had been introduced to South Africa in the final years of the 19th century, black South Africans were essentially deprived of the cinema in both rural areas and in 'black' townships (ibid.). 40 years after the birth of cinema, there were only four cinema halls for black patrons left open in the entire country (ibid.). A small number of community-based film programs did exist, but these were predominantly organised by philanthropists and missionaries who collaborated with the mining industry in the hope of "moralising the leisure time of Africans" (ibid.).

This is not to say that all films made in South Africa during this period adopted apartheid's cinematic mantra. There were a small number of films in the 1940s and 1950s that attempted to show South African society in a way that portrayed some modicum of lived reality for black South Africans (ibid.). The aforementioned constraints that black South Africans faced in the South African film industry meant that the responsibility of trying to show some approximation of the truth, and perhaps be critical of the system fell upon the shoulders upon a small number of white independent filmmakers (ibid.).

One of the earliest examples of these films was the 1949 film, *African Jim – Jim Comes to Jo'burg*, which was directed by Donald Swanson and Eric Rutherford (Botha, 2012: 35). This film and others like Zoltan Korda's *Cry The Beloved Country* (1951) tried to show hidden or perhaps silenced aspects of South African society (with varying results) (ibid.). However, the film that was most explicitly critical of the apartheid system from this era was Lionel Rogosin's 1959 film *Come Back, Africa* (Botha, 2012; 38).

The situation for alternative cinema had slightly improved by the 1970s, but the problems that had typified the industry in the 1960s continued to manifest themselves in new and frustrating ways (Botha, 2012: 69). The rising turmoil of the political situation in the country did little to change the way white audiences consumed feature films as escapism continued to be the norm (ibid.). There were small signs of hope in the subversive films that auteurs like Jans Rautenbach and Manie Van Rensburg were making, but they had to tread lightly to avoid censorship (ibid.).

Subsequently, the conservative audiences who most needed to watch thought-provoking films about South African society, spurned these rare cinematic jewels in favour of films that portrayed Afrikaners as "chatty, heart-warming and lovable" which meant that "their conception of socio-political reality was confined to the conventions of Afrikaans melodramas about mismatched couples who had to overcome obstacles on the path to true love" (ibid.).

A total lack of audience development was not the only problem to manifest itself in the 1970s, the old spectre of censorship continued to pose a threat for both local and international films (ibid.). While many film cultures around the world were experiencing something of a renaissance in terms of the subject matter their films were engaging with, South Africa still had to put up with harsh moral censorship (ibid.). Botha argues that this environment prevented South African audiences from seeing international films such as "Fellini's *Satyricon* (1969), Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* (1972) and Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* (1966)", the type of films that he believes "would have challenged [South Africans'] conceptions of sexuality, politics, race and aesthetics" (ibid.).

The 1970s did produce a significant change to the South African cinematic landscape in the form of a purported Bantu film industry (Botha, 2012: 12). The Bantu film industry was a further contributor to the severe fragmentation of the South African film industry (ibid.). The reasoning behind the formation of this industry was predominantly economic as opposed to any kind of softening of political attitudes (Botha, 2012: 115). Rather the primary motivating factor was the introduction of the B scheme, a new government subsidy system, which made funds available for inexperienced white filmmakers to go out and make so-called ethnic language films on shoe-string budgets (Botha, 2012: 115). The white filmmakers involved in these films were often oblivious to the nuances of black culture and more often than not did not speak any form of Nguni language; the actors thus had to translate their own dialogue (ibid.).

Furthermore, this large number of poor quality B-scheme films did almost nothing to challenge the dominant myths that South African cinema under apartheid had been perpetuating. In this respect, the films that were created under this scheme portrayed black urbanisation as "uniformly

negative and homeland life as more fitting" (Botha, 2012: 115). The Bantu Film industry eventually suffered the same fate as the other fragmented entities that made up South African film industry during apartheid (Botha, 2012: 13). This is because "any film that managed to be made reflecting in any way the South African society in turmoil was banned by the state, or received no distribution whatsoever, and thus did not qualify for any film subsidy." (Botha, 2012: 13).

By 1980, the political violence in the country resembled something akin to a civil war, and by the middle of the decade South Africa's economy had become threatened by the divestment campaign and the widespread departure of multi-national capital (Tomaselli, 1989: 9). Tomaselli argues that by December 1986, it had become apparent that the government was not going to concede to any demands for change and that all the talk of "reform" during this period was simply a delaying tactic (ibid.). He summarizes the mainstream film industry's reaction to these events thusly:

While the English-language South African press demanded the release of Mandela and the legalization of the ANC, much of the film industry blithely continued as if nothing was happening. The Producers Institute vehemently objected to an issue of *The SAFTTA Journal* which focused on the cultural boycott, while Agfa-Gevaert, a German producer of film stock, withdrew its advertising from the *Journal* in protest (Tomaselli, 1989: 9)

One of the reasons for the mainstream industry's general lack of interest in making any kind of attempt at a critical cinema was the lucrative film boom that had occurred in the South African industry at this point in time (Botha, 2012: 13). The boom occurred because large tax concessions were offered by the government, which made film investment a very appealing financial prospect (ibid.). Botha notes that "several hundred films were made, mostly inferior imitations of American genre" and that the "majority of these tax-shelter films did not reflect any recognisable socio-political reality" (ibid.). This system led to substantial self-censorship on the part of filmmakers because financiers who had gotten into the film industry to take advantage of the tax-breaks, would not risk their investments on films that would run the risk of banning or audience rejection (Botha, 2012: 121). However, this tax-shelter scheme collapsed at the end of the 1980s and this part of the South African industry was essentially destroyed (Botha, 2012: 13).

The 1980s were not simply defined by this general lack of interest in progressive cinema, film historians also point to the years of 1986/1987 as a turning point for the industry for a number of reasons (Botha, 2012: 122). One of the primary reasons was the emergence of a number of filmmakers who were not associated with the mainstream film industry and instead went about making films about the lives of the majority of South Africa's population (Botha, 2012: 13). This movement started to operate in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, but it arrived in earnest around the years of 1986/1987 (ibid.).

Tomaselli notes that this period was also auspicious because for one of the first times in the South African cinematic history, a film that was critical of the apartheid system was screened in cinemas (1989: 10). The film was Darrell Roodt's *A Place of Weeping* (1987) and it explored the poor treatment that some black farm workers received at the hands of some white farmers (Botha, 2012: 123). According to Botha, it was part of a collection of films that made up "a cinema that gave a voice to those who were previously marginalised by apartheid" (ibid.).

Botha argues that the films of this revival can be called progressive film texts because they consciously critiqued the apartheid system (2012: 14). This critique was either done through the cinematic recovery of silenced narratives about South Africa's past, such as Darrel Roodt's *Jobman* (1989) or through an exploration of the contemporary political situation, such as the events depicted in Oliver Schmitz' landmark film *Mapantsula* (1989) (ibid.). However, just because progressive films were finally being made after the 1986/1987 alternative film revival, it did not mean they were being seen by South African audiences (Botha, 2012: 125). Whilst new avenues for funding had been opened as a result of the aforementioned events, substantial problems of censorship remained a thorn in the side of progressive filmmakers (Botha, 2012: 123-124).

Botha asserts that the fact that good directors of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s kept on making films that challenged the status quo (even though they suffered from censorship and uninterested audiences) is a testament to the talent and ability that South African cinema has always had (2012: 125). He goes on to say that the progressive films of the 1980s were of particular importance because it is from these cinematic texts that one can draw the iconography and

symbolism of a truly national cinema as opposed to "the diversions produced by the Afrikaans-language cinema of the 1970s, the *Bantu* film industry and the tax-shelter films" (Botha, 2012: 14).

It becomes clear that the history of the South African film industry is one that is characterised by fragmentation, crass commercialism and racial exclusionism. These are problems that continue to cast a long shadow over the country's cinematic production in the contemporary democratic era.

5. State Funding in the Rainbow Nation

Saks argues that the landmark elections of 1994 were a nationalist moment in which the mediums of cinema and television were both conscripted to try to build a new society out of the fragments of the old one (2010: 13-14). However, after the relatively peaceful transition from apartheid to a constitutional democracy had taken place, the issue of state funding loomed large in the film industry.

5.1 The Pre-NFVF Funding Climate

The year 1994 was an auspicious year for South African cinema; the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) completed a thorough study on how to go about restructuring the entire South African film industry and forwarded it to the newly established Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) (Botha, 2012: 15). The HSRC research team recommended that there should be a statutory body established to administer financial aid to the local film industry and that commercial viability should not be the only factor in deciding what project gets government support (ibid.). It was believed that a "film industry that is focused exclusively on maximising profit would inevitably become shallow and artless" (ibid.).

Botha notes that an interim film fund was announced by the DACST in May 1996 to replace the old funding schemes that had either failed or had been discontinued (2012: 165). This film fund had the responsibility of annually distributing R10 million amongst various projects until a permanent film statutory body could be established (ibid.). In 1996, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) published the White Paper on Film "after a protracted period of consultation and debate between stakeholders, politicians, cultural workers, and filmmakers" (Saks, 2010: 33).

Saks argues that the White Paper was the embodiment of the country's policy of cinematic restructuring, this process of restructuring was defined in the White Paper as being "integral to the success of the democratic project (2010: 33). She summarises some of the issues related to the White Paper thusly:

What strikes one in reading the paper is the fluidity with which it combines the "fighting rhetoric" of postcolonial discourse with phrases that could have emerged from a reader on neoliberal economic policy. No distinction is made, for example, between the concept of a national cinema that "will enable South African audiences to see their own interpretations of their experience and stories reflected on local screens" and the creation of a film industry based "on a sound commercial footing in order to enable it to become internationally competitive (ibid.).

Saks argues that this somewhat bifurcated definition of what role cinema should play in post-apartheid South Africa continues in the second chapter of the White Paper (ibid.). The second chapter highlights the importance of cinema as a form of cultural expression and as a means of exploring "social meanings" (ibid.). In something of a contradictory fashion, it also refers to the cinema as a means of generating substantial employment, income and providing opportunities for investment (ibid.). The cinema is also credited in a later paragraph of the White Paper as having the potential to promote the country as a potential destination for tourists, as well as location that could be used by international film and advertising productions (ibid.). The low costs in comparison due to the United States and the European Union would apparently be a benefit in favour of the South African industry (ibid.).

The White Paper does not take a clear position on what type of cinema post-apartheid South Africa should produce because it is not a manifesto (Saks, 2010: 34). Saks argues that contains elements that makes one think that it's a manifesto, but the White Paper is in fact a state paper that is meant to satisfy diverse constituencies (ibid.). As a paper that emerged in a post-apartheid context, a context in which everybody is supposed to have a voice under the new dispensation; it has to speak for the interests of the film industry, the interests of the state and at least attempt to talk on behalf of the disempowered majority of the population (ibid.).

5.2 The National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF)

Saks argues that the White Paper mandated that a film foundation be created in order to pursue a number of objectives in the construction of a film industry that would take appropriate actions in the post-apartheid context (2010: 34). This film foundation would have a number of duties to perform; it would ensure that any available state funding was distributed, it would promote the

South African film industry, it would ensure that a diversity of film genres and types is maintained without the emphasis being solely on commercial value and it would ensure that cinema culture in South Africa grew (ibid.). This foundation would not be under the direct control of the government however, which was an important condition considering the problematic history of film subsidies in South Africa, which were often incoherent, generally corrupt and almost always racist (ibid.).

The promulgation of the National Film and Video Foundation Act 73 of 1997 led to the formation of the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) (Botha, 2012: 160). By 1999, the NFVF had finally been established to support the South African film industry, and by 2000 it had started to allocate funding (Botha, 2012: 166). Saks argues that the NFVF holds to a central ideology that:

... models transformation in postcolonial, nationalist terms and interprets filmmakers as deserving of state patronage because they are cultural workers participating in the construction of South African cinema/media. Its view of cinema is prescriptive, idealistic, artisanal, and auteurist (2010: 7)

However, adequate state funding in the post-apartheid filmmaking context has long been a problem (Saks, 2010: 38). One of the factors behind this problem is the recurring narrative in South African society that asks whether the funding of the arts and culture is a good use of resources, especially when so many societal problems are left over from apartheid (Saks, 2010: 30-31). This lack of funding has significantly weakened the NFVF's ability to carry out its objectives, especially considering it is dependent on support from the government and it is unlikely that the Foundation would be able to find financial support from other sources (Saks, 2010: 38).

Saks asserts that the NFVF was initially framed in terms of the ANC's government's first economic program, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which was run from 1994 to 1996 (ibid.). The RDP placed an emphasis on the government ensuring that there was movement towards a more equitable distribution of income (ibid.). To achieve the RDP's goals, there would have to be a paradigm shift with investment flowing into the poorest sectors of the

economy and personal income tax becoming substantially more progressive (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 2). Subsequently, the overall principle of the RDP was that "redistribution was a principal and would not be held hostage to growth" (Saks, 2010: 39).

However, the RDP's days were numbered because the last quarter of 1996 saw the coming of "Growth, Employment And Redistribution" (GEAR), a neoliberal development policy orchestrated by the then Vice-President Thabo Mbeki (Saks, 2010: 39; Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 2). Saks asserts that GEAR "turned the RDP on its head by placing (G)rowth first, (E)mployment second, (A)nd (R)edistribution last" (Saks, 2010: 39). However, to attain the growth that GEAR needed, there would have to be significant reforms, reforms that were not conducive to the NFVF supporting a film industry that was concerned with more parochial or artistic endeavours (ibid.).

Under the GEAR reforms, the NFVF was subsequently urged to fundraise in a more proactive manner, the foundation also became more interested with marketing the South African film industry to the rest of the world and less concerned with the artistic merits of the films that were being made (Saks, 2010: 39). International co-productions in particular were emphasised in this economic climate (ibid.). The NFVF thus has had to try and align utopian goals written during the RDP period with economic policy written during the GEAR period (Saks, 2010: 38-39).

Treffry-Goatley notes the NFVF also published a value charter, it was a document based upon the 1996 White Paper and it served as the NFVF's blueprint for the continued development of the post-apartheid film industry (2010: 5). This value charter listed the NFVF's vision thusly:

[Our vision is] a South African film and video industry that mirrors and represents the nation, sustains commercial viability, encourages development and provides a medium through which the creative and technical talents of South Africans are able to reach the world (2002: 1)

Treffry-Goatley argues that this vision contains many ideological strands from a number of different interested parties and that the various competing interests show the attempts to "to

marry the rectification of apartheid-derived injustices with a neoliberal, export driven paradigm" (2010: 5).

In August 2001, the NFVF hosted a film indaba (an industry meeting) to present their research findings to the various stakeholders and industry players of the South African film and video industry (Botha, 2012: 172). The research had been performed on a variety of matters involving the local industry, with issues relating to film production and training and development being discussed along with the way forward for the industry (ibid.). Saks argues that the following suggestions for state interventions were made during the indaba regarding how the NFVF could potentially increase its funding:

The value-added tax (VAT) could be collected on cinema tickets, there could be a withholding tax on foreign films screened in the country, a withholding tax on royalties paid to foreign film distributors, and a clear monitoring of investment companies to prevent abuse of South African incentives to produce films of benefit to the industry (as had happened in the eighties) (2010: 39-40).

However, none of these suggestions were implemented, and by the time of the 2005 Film Indaba, the NFVF was in full "business mode" (Saks, 2010: 40). The aforementioned value charter had been "transmuted" into a "value chain", which Saks describes as an organogram that "looked more like a business plan for the industry than a developmental strategy for an emerging film industry" (ibid.). This period was defined by a new system for getting funding from the government, a concept needed to be backed up by its supposed potential for distribution (ibid.). Thus getting distribution for a product was a prerequisite for getting funding for the product (ibid.). Funding was then followed by the manufacture of the product and finally the marketing of the product (ibid.).

Distribution in this sense does not simply mean a run on the cinema circuit but could also include broadcasting, video or non-conventional sites such as schools; churches, halls, festivals and universities (ibid.). In this regard, a project needed to be defined and aimed at a viable audience (ibid.). The word "viable" in this sense does not only refer to financial viability, because not all projects are concerned with profit (ibid.). For example a project dealing with health issues would quantify success by the size of the audience reached as opposed to profits earned (ibid.).

However there is always a difficulty in defining the audience for a project because such an endeavour requires data that is quantifiable (ibid.). Therefore, unless there is some way of quantifying the potential audience, it is highly unlikely that any distributor, whether they are conventional or alternative, will provide temporal or financial resources in distributing a product (ibid.). Projects that do not align with conventionality subsequently run into serious troubles because it is hard to obtain measurable data on innovation (ibid.).

Similarly, if a filmmaker is attempting to diversify the country's cinematic culture and wants to develop an audience for alternative cinematic projects, then one cannot attempt to measure the audience potential before an audience has developed in response to alternative cinematic projects (ibid.). Or as Saks puts it: "there is no way to measure the audience potential for projects that do not yet exist" (ibid.).

Saks argues that these issues do not point to what the NFVF terms a "dependency syndrome" in which people are waiting for the government to do all the work for them, but significant obstacles on the road to empowering talented filmmakers who have potential to make films with new and exciting elements but have yet to be given the financial opportunity to do so (ibid.). Furthermore, without upfront funding a prospective filmmaker can't do research as to whether there is a potential audience for their work (ibid.). New filmmakers and producers could in theory attain private funding for their work from some other sources, but Saks argues that such an occurrence is highly unlikely as "private capital" is aversive to risk (ibid.). The lack of experience and professional training in the case of some filmmakers also makes it unlikely for funding to become available for newcomers to the industry or those who wish to make films in new ways (ibid.). Saks argues that this situation is made worse by "the shortage of black capital that might be persuaded to take a risk" (2010: 40). She further defines the problem with distribution circuits thusly:

Distribution (which includes exhibition) circuits are conservative and committed to the bottom line. Since local films have done badly at the box office, they are not willing to take a risk unless forced to do so as in the case of local content mandates for broadcasting. The NFVF is the only advocate for the disempowered (in terms of film and filmmaking), but it

appears to have abandoned that role, acting instead on behalf of the industry as a "service deliverer to the broader industry," a "strategic partner in the industry." (Saks, 2010: 40-41)

Saks references Martin Botha, who was the head of the HSRC report which initially put forth the suggestion of a film foundation (2010: 41). Botha asserted that a "crude commercialisation" was occurring at the NFVF, and in a 2005 interview he asserted that projects were being rejected as "non-commercial" and that funding applicants were being asked for "rushes" and "pitches" of new projects that were 25 words or less (Saks, 2010: 41).

The NFVF's funding limitations have affected the accomplished directors as well as the newcomers, Botha notes the example of Ross Devenish, whose films *The Guest* (1977) and *Marigolds in August* (1979) received international acclamation (2012: 190). Devenish's script based upon Zakes Mda's novel, *Ways of Dying* (2005) has been rejected for funding by the NFVF (Botha, 2012: 190; Saks, 2010: 41). Botha claimed in the aforementioned 2005 interview that there was a marginalisation of non-mainstream cinema occurring and that a new avant-garde cinema needed to emerge in the "name of progressivity" (ibid.).

Treffry-Goatley notes the massive impact that additional financing could have on the industry by referring to the example of the Special Feature Film Production Fund (2010: 74). It was fund of R35 million rand which was granted to the NFVF by the Department of Arts and Culture between the years 2004 and 2006 (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 74). She notes that this fund produced a record for feature film production in 2005, with the number of films produced practically doubling from seven to thirteen (ibid.). Botha likewise argues that there was a revival of the feature film industry during this period, with a great deal of South African feature films being submitted to the 2004 Cannes Film Festival (2012: 182). Botha argues that the high point of this "South African New Wave" was Gavin Hood's 2005 film *Tsotsi* winning the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film of the Year at 2006 Academy Awards (2012: 188). However the DAC did not renew the Special Feature Film Production Fund, which stifled this flourishing of South African feature filmmaking and resulted in a substantial decline in production (Botha, 2012: 188).

Botha asserts that by the year 2008, two contrasting developments became readily apparent (2012: 191). The grants from the NFVF which are meant to constitute government funding of the

film industry remain as Botha puts it: "hopelessly inadequate" (ibid.). The second development was that a new generation of filmmakers have managed to succeed in spite of the funding climate by attaining alternate funding for their projects. Some of these projects have even gone on to be watched by audiences and enjoy mainstream success (ibid.) One of these projects, Ralph Ziman's 2008 crime film *Jerusalema* shall be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Rainbowism's effects on the NFVF can possibly be seen in the way that during the first decade of the new South Africa, the films that were made had not covered certain topics with a great deal of depth; such as the structural causes of ongoing poverty and homelessness and the continuing hatred between South Africa's peoples (Saks, 2010: 9). Saks highlights an issue which is at the crux of this dissertation, namely that there has been a widespread inability or unwillingness on the part of the state-subsidised films to critique the state or "address ongoing white racism and black rage as conditions of society and subjectivity"(ibid.). She goes on to say that while post-apartheid South Africa might not have developed a cinema that is capable of performing this critique of the state, or formulating a response to the hatred and rage that is leftover from South Africa's violent past (Saks, 2010: 10). It has managed to produce a "tapestry of voices" which has been a contributor to the process of making the public sphere more democratic (ibid.).

However, the question remains as to whether this broader tapestry of voices are truly being given the opportunity to let their voices be heard if the main recourse for state funding has been co-opted by a type of "crude commercialism" (Saks, 2010: 40-41). A commercialism that does not allow for the creation of products that will work towards building audiences or diversifying South African cinematic culture (ibid.). To phrase this problem in the form of a question: If a filmmaker's voice is being heard, but they are being told what to say by the state then what is the point of speaking? The state might reply that: "money talks". This is an anecdotal explanation as to why the film industry has fully embraced a role as a "service industry" to the global film industry.

5.3 The "Service" Industry

Treffry-Goatley argues that while some aspects of the local film industry might be perceived as failures, the "service" side of the industry has been a massive success (2010: 63). The "service" industry refers to the logistical and technical support that the industry gives to international productions (ibid.). There are a number of reasons for South Africa becoming a premium attraction for foreign productions; there is the country's stable and warm climate, the existing physical and legal infrastructure (ibid.). As well as the ready availability of skilled cast and crew and the world-class production and post-production facilities (ibid.). The NFVF's 2013 *South African Film Industry Economic Baseline Study Report*, which they commissioned accounting firm Deloitte to perform, summarises this situation thusly:

Films which encourage viewers to visit the country or site where films were shot, which is often labelled "film-induced tourism" or "movie-induced tourism"... can become the catalyst for investment tourism and can bolster additional movies setting their location within that area. South Africa has a well established reputation for having a good climate, stunning locations and a generous rebate structure. This has led to a strategy of encouraging films and producers to locate themselves in South Africa (2013: 32).

Treffry-Goatley notes that the success of this sector of the industry has had the effect of encouraging the state to further invest in industry infrastructure in order to stimulate growth and increase the industry's competitiveness (2010: 63). She asserts that "[t]his infrastructure and relevant state incentives have assisted the production of local films" (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 63).

Treffry-Goatley argues that the continuing problem in the South African industry is the fact that local films have generally performed poorly at the box office, with about half of the feature films produced between 2000-2007 failing to recoup 10 percent of their production costs at the local box office (2010: 63-64). However, she also notes that there have been small glimmers of hope at the box office with ticket-sales gradually improving and 2008 being the most profitable year in a long time (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 64). She asserts that these improvements at the box office can be linked to the success of local comedy features like Henk Pretorius' film *Bakgat* (2008), Gray Hofmeyr's *Mr. Bones 2: Back From the Past* and Ralph Ziman's gangster film *Jerusalema* (2008) (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 65).

5.4 The Industrial Development Corporation (Media and Motion Picture Division)

The Media and Motion Picture Division of the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) located under the auspices of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) does not concern itself with the motion picture as an art form. This is because the DTI sees motion pictures as a commodity to be traded like any other (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 72). The IDC is far more concerned with providing financing for productions that will attract "international players" (Saks, 2010: 7-8). A project is feasible for the IDC when South Africa is the shooting location and an international market can be found for the project, a goal that they call "globalizing from both ends" (ibid.).

In terms of funding, the IDC provides a maximum of 49% of the production budget on a investment of R1 million rand minimum (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 86). Financial assistance from the IDC usually comes in the form of "loan finance, by means of equity, quasi-equity, commercial loans, wholesale finance, share warehousing, export/import finance, short-term trade finance, and guarantees" (Silinda, 2008: 25). This IDC funding usually goes towards co-productions, a form of film production that has become very popular in a global filmmaking environment that continues to see the production, distribution and exhibition of films dominated by a seemingly endless supply of Hollywood product (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 89). The production models of international co-productions often take the form of financial agreements where the budget of a film is split between two or more international partners (ibid.). The IDC receives more funding in terms of state finance than the NFVF and more of this money has been spent on foreign films than local films (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 92; Saks, 2010: 7-8). This has been done in the hopes of getting the aforementioned international players (such as big name directors, producers and acting talent) involved in the South African industry (ibid.).

However, Treffry-Goatley goes on to say that there are cultural considerations to take into account along with the economic factors that come with the IDC's favourite model of film production (2010: 93). She says that the IDC's funding policy is geared towards films with high-production values and commercialised productions for export (ibid.). She argues that in the case

of co-productions, where a number of interested parties are making films for global markets, one can see that these films encourage a form of cultural blandness and a certain loss of parochial specificity (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 94).

In the case of South African stories made as co-productions, they are being made culturally bland to appeal to the widest possible audience, but at the same time Rainbowism is the selling point that makes them unique. This statement obviously requires some elaboration; Saks argues that South Africa's "moment of rapture" in 1994 not only affected the country and the African continent, but it made the entire world sit up and take notice (2010: 14). The "South African miracle", as the early events of the halo-period became known, attained significant "global cultural capital" (ibid.) The Truth and Reconciliation Commission added to this global cultural capital, because according to Saks:

Unlike previous truth commissions, South Africa's TRC was a self-consciously public and open performance, conducted in full view of the world's media on stages in public venues (churches and town halls) and in front of an audience. Those not present were able to hear the proceedings word for word on the radio and television. This fact, plus the ability of the Commission to grant conditional amnesty to the perpetrators in exchange for full and honest disclosure of crimes committed as part of a political agenda, gave the proceedings the sort of drama one associates with cinema or the theatre (2010: 84).

There have been various criticisms of the TRC, but Saks argues that while many of the criticisms of the TRC are trenchant, they does not nullify the commissions achievements and they not make inert the prestige that the country earned locally and around the world for its dignified political transition to democracy (2010: 88). Saks goes on to say that if South Africa has "become an imaginary site for the West, a place in which the tired narratives of modernity can be replayed with different and perhaps more optimistic outcomes, this was in no small part due to the TRC" (ibid.). In this respect, even though South Africa might have has lost some of its lustre in the eyes of the West as time went on and societal problems piled up (Saks, 2010: 89). Saks references Marsha Kinder who alleges that South Africa still maintains "considerable transformational capital" in a world that longs to see some form of modern-day happy ending to a seemingly-intransigent conflict (ibid.). This is one reason as to why drama films centred on the

TRC and the apartheid past have been regularly made as co-productions with Hollywood stars in leading roles (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 87).

Therefore, many drama films which are international co-productions of South African stories can be seen to employ some discourse of Rainbowism as a means of tapping into this "transformational capital". Rainbowism in a co-production involving South Africa's apartheid past allows for all the drama associated with this painful past, whilst ensuring that even if the ending isn't happy, then there is at least a form of closure due to the use of a restorative Hollywood film structure (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 53). The restorative structure implies to both international audiences and local audiences that a clear line can be drawn between the apartheid and post-apartheid era. It also implies to viewers that the change in political system and the work of TRC was the definitive end of South Africa's racial issues, as opposed to the beginning of South Africa's long journey towards healing and reconciliation.

However, Treffry-Goatley notes that co-productions are often failures on the local market, one of the reasons for this might be related to genre because by far the most popular films in South Africa belong to the comedy genre (2010: 95). Whilst the majority of co-productions during the period of 1994 to 2009 were drama films (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 96). She argues that is possible that perhaps:

... the dominance of the drama genre in co-productions is an indication of the export-driven nature of such productions, because while comedies are often parochial, dramas have a greater potential to travel across cultures since audiences are able to identify with a character's emotional journey. Nevertheless, this generic choice has certainly not increased the popularity of co-productions with local audiences (ibid.).

This is not to say that drama is the only legitimate or authentic way to look at South Africa's painful history and its continuing effects on post-apartheid society (Bisschoff, 2009: 451). Bisschoff argues that "the use of comedy and humour in recent South African films hints at the possibility that a genre is also developing that does not necessarily deal with post-apartheid issues in a dramatic way" (ibid.). While it is possible to extrapolate that the loss of cultural specificity in these films possibly puts local audiences off going to see these dramatic co-

productions in general. Another factor that contributes to the failure of these films might be an issue of post-apartheid audience development.

5.5 The Issue of Audiences

The 2013 baseline study states that South Africa has a cinema-going audience that consists of approximately 5.5 million individuals who go to the cinema an average of 4.5 times per year (NFVF, 2013: 44). This relatively small number of cinema attendees significantly limits the revenue earned from this exhibition platform (ibid.). Added to these challenges, there is a continued lack of a cinema-going culture amongst South Africa's black population, who by-and-large are still limited by apartheid spatial development and other issues described in the historical contextualisation found in Chapter 4 (ibid.).

The baseline study states that a further reason for this lack of cinema attendance amongst the majority of the population is the fact that there is a lack of relevant content (ibid.). The current demographics who go to the cinemas seek out Western content ahead of locally produced content; the majority of the box-office sales emerge out of this scenario (ibid.). The baseline study concludes after having had discussions with "black film producers, audiences and broadcasters" that "black audiences do not generally find this content culturally relevant and thus prefer to watch TV and purchase DVD's where content is colloquial" (ibid.).

Therefore, if the majority of audience members in the country are white South Africans who benefited economically from apartheid and who have been exposed to a form of Rainbowism for nearly two decades. Then it seems unlikely that they will seek out cinematic texts which look back at the apartheid past, especially considering that Rainbowism seeks to reify the "now" by silencing the "then" of the past. At the same time the increasing numbers of black middle class people who go to the cinema obviously do not want to be reminded of the horrors of apartheid (Pickering in McCluskey, 2009: 185). This ties into developments in broader African cinema to a certain extent, Alexie Tcheuyap argues that post-colonial African directors have become more interested in entertaining audiences than reminding them of the "undeniably unhealthy experience" of colonialism (2011: 30).

5.6 Low-Budget and Digital Cinema

There are number of developments in the industry that can be interpreted as challenging the neoliberal dominance of film production in South Africa (Botha, 2012: 249). One example is the alternative production model that emerged out of the growth of digital technology in the global film industry (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 102; Botha, 2012: 249). There has been a clear trend of low-budget digital films emerging in recent years, these films target the broader demographics of the population who have been under-serviced in terms of relevant content (NFVF, 2013: 38). Broadcasters and producers have seen that this market lay untapped and have rectified the situation by making a great number of productions which address everyday black realities in vernacular languages such as TsiVenda, IsiZulu and IsiXhosa (NFVF, 2013: 38; Young, 2013: online resource). The baseline report states that the "market for these low budget films is estimated at a maximum of R200 million (including distribution). Many of these productions are funded by broadcasters in return for TV rights, with the producers earning income from the DVD rights" (NFVF, 2013: 38). Some successful examples of this trend are MNet's Bubblegum Films; Chicco Twala's self-produced films, ETV's Ekasi Films and Ekasi Movie Nights (NFVF, 2013: 38). However the term "Bubblegum Films" is often used interchangeably to describe all the low-budget vernacular films in this category. The baseline study states that "[t]his is a sector that is set to grow provided it continues to get funding and the sector can survive the impacts of piracy (NFVF, 2013: 39)"

Along with the aforementioned low-budget films targeted at the black majority there is a flourishing Afrikaans-language low-budget cinema known as "Hartiwood" (Young, 2013: online resource). The name comes from the fact that these films are primarily shot in areas around the Hartbeespoort Dam (ibid.). These Afrikaans-language films tell Afrikaans stories that are in recognisable in some way to middle-class Afrikaners and are screened close to where the target audience lives (ibid.). Botha argues that these films, examples of which include the box-office successes *Poena is Koning* (2007) and *Bakgat* (2008), continue the escapist tradition that characterised Afrikaans cinema during the 1970s (2012: 191).

Thus it remains to be seen if a critical or art cinema emerges out of either the Bubblegum films or the low-budget Afrikaans cinema. When one considers that both these types of cinema are premised upon the repetition of the familiar themes and plot-points, it seems unlikely that the funders of these films will risk alienating consumers by not giving them exactly what they want. In the case of the bubblegum films in particular, it seems unlikely that many broadcasters and producers would support experimentation with form and narrative when there is fierce competition from other bubblegum films. Furthermore, while low-budget digital filmmaking allows more people to be making films in the industry, the small-budgets only allow for certain kinds of stories to be told.

The baseline study does propose the "development of a separate Film Incentive for low budget films targeting the broader demographic" (NFVF, 2013: 49). However, considering the extent to which the NFVF has continued to align itself with commercialism it seems unlikely that this film incentive will do much to change the status quo in the low-budget side of the industry. Thus it is important to avoid seeing digital cinema as the "glorious solution" to the problems that continue to plague the post-apartheid film industry; instead this technology needs to be seen as an alternative model which will run parallel to already-established technologies (Botha, 2012: 249). In this regard, Treffry-Goatley asserts that even though:

... digital technology might be seen as an ideal mechanism for democratisation of cinematic production and consumption in post-apartheid South Africa, this technology should not be viewed as a means for independent filmmakers to make it alone. State support is still needed to maintain diversity and to support sustainability, because, while digital technology *has* made cinema somewhat more accessible, the production, distribution and exhibition of motion pictures in South Africa remains monopolised, exclusive and inaccessible to the majority (2010: 117).

5.7 The DTI Film Incentive

Another mechanism of state support is the rebate initiative offered by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) that was launched in 2004. This rebate initiative is also sometimes known as the DTI Film Incentive and its funding conditions are less stringent than the NFVF or those schemes which are offered by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) (Treffry-Goatley,

2011: 98). The film incentive has gone through a number of revisions since its launch, with the local industry now being supported as well as the production-for-export model of the service industry (ibid.). A fixed percentage of the funds spent on a production known as "Qualifying South African Production Expenditure" (QSAPE) is returned to the producer once the project is completed, or at predefined milestone (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 98; NFVF, 2013: 11). The producer(s) of a project stand to receive between 20% and 35% of the QSAPE in rebates through retrospective payments or the milestone option if they qualify for the scheme (NFVF, 2013: 35). However, they need to have 25% of the production budget in place before making the application, once they have secured 25% of the project's production budget they can make a provisional application to the DTI for the film incentive (NFVF, 2013: 35). Upon attaining 50% of the project's funding the producer can then apply to the IDC for their funding schemes (ibid.). However, the lack of upfront funding mean in many cases a film producer cannot get to the 25% mark which would allow them to make the application, thus many promising projects never progress into the production stage (ibid.).

Treffry-Goatley argues that the DTI's commitment to addressing the issue of racial inequality in the industry is also evident in the way that all the companies applying for the DTI Film Incentive are expected to meet the government's requirements for Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) (2010: 99). There appears to have some substantial progress made towards greater parity in terms of employment equity as reflected in the data located in the baseline study (NFVF, 2013: 39). The study showed that in 2012, 66% of those individuals employed in the South African film industry belonged to the black majority, compared to 34% of the employees who belonged to the white minority (ibid.). The data also showed that 54% of those jobs that were skilled or semi-skilled were occupied by white individuals, compared to the 46% of jobs which were occupied by black individuals (ibid.).

However the baseline study makes no mention of the number of black directors or screenwriters working in the industry or to what extent black individuals are in positions of creative control. This lack of information about the creative or artistic side of the industry ties into a wider pattern of the NFVF privileging the economic side of the industry as opposed to the artistic side, an issue

which film worker Roger Young wrote about in an op-ed for the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper in 2013 (online resource).

5.8 The Sediba System

Young asserts that the fact that the report is centred upon economics and often references the export market, seems to suggest that the NFVF under the leadership of chief executive Zama Mkosi and head of development Clarence Hamilton is driven primarily by economic concerns and the potential for export (2013: online resource). He notes how in a statement regarding the NFVF's trip to Cannes to promote South Africa as a shooting location (and not to screen films in competition) Mkosi said: "As we take our filmmakers and film projects there, our objective is very clear: we want to attract new markets and investments" (In Young, 2013: online resource). Furthermore, at the release of the baseline report, the then Minister of Arts and Culture, Paul Mashatile, said that the success of South African films abroad "...also indicates that the world wants to hear the South African story; a story of the triumph of the human spirit" (In Young, 2013: online resource). Young believes that "this statement presents problems to filmmakers who might feel that there are other South African stories" (2013: online resource).

This focus upon selling the South African story to the rest of the world, finds major representation in the Sediba Scriptwriter's Training and Development Programme; it is an NFVF initiative that was launched in 2005 that teaches both new and established filmmakers how to write and edit film scripts (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 81). The program is heavily associated with former CEO Eddie Mbalo and former Head of Production Ryan Haidarian (Mkosi and Hamilton's predecessors) who had significant influence on shaping South African cinematic stories until about 2011 (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 82; Young, 2013: online resource). Mbalo was quoted in 2009 as saying that "it is good for filmmakers to pursue their aspirations we need to find stories that can travel" and that "the best way is through script development and this is why we have the Sediba script development programme" (24).

Treffry-Goatley argues that this statement implies that the script writing taught at the Sediba course is meant to help make films that "can appeal to a wide audience and relates to the

emphasis on commercial sustainability evident in the NFVF's vision for film industry development" (2010: 81). In an interview with Treffry-Goatley, Mbalo and Haidarian come across as very well intentioned, albeit slightly too dogmatic with an almost religious devotion to the classical three-act narrative structure and a mimicry of Hollywood forms (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 81-82). Haidarian admitted in the interview that the types of screenwriting books that Sediba used as exemplars of what made a story "work" did not look at alternative narrative structures (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 82). She goes on to say that Haidarian and Mbalo made a number of references to the seminal work of the anthropologist Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and that "Haidarian explained that the three-act [classic] narrative structure and the hero's journey are in fact, based on the results presented in this book, which proves the universality of story telling" (ibid.).

While Treffry-Goatley's qualitative interviews conducted during the course of her 2010 PhD research found that "there was a relatively balanced response to the three-act narrative structure" (2010: 83). The same balanced response did not exist for Sediba, with up to 71 percent of the respondents being mostly critical of the program with "the relevance and efficiency of short-term scriptwriting courses being questioned" as well as "fault being found with the way in which the programme is run" and "the programme being seen an infringement on creativity" (ibid.).

Treffry-Goatley argues that it becomes evident that the NFVF has considerable influence over what kinds of stories that the state decides to fund (2010: 83). This kind of emphasis on commercial success and economic sustainability, sets South Africa apart from the state system in a country like France where the "purpose is to develop culture" (ibid.). In the interview with Treffry-Goatley, Haidarian asserted that by contrast the South African state is "investing in this sector of the economy because they think that this could be a real driver of the economy" (In Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 311). Thus as Treffry-Goatley argues:

This method is differentiated from a content-led strategy where emphasis is placed on subsidy schemes and the individual artistic expression of the filmmaker. Given the increasing market-orientation of the post-apartheid film industry, it is likely that – in the absence of relevant intervention measures – black and white filmmakers alike, will find themselves tailoring their stories to suit the tastes of either foreign audiences ... or the existing national audience, which has seen little change since apartheid (2010: 83).

This homogenising approach to cinematic storytelling has the potential to infringe upon a filmmaker's constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of expression (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 85). Furthermore, if national cinematic production is informed by the hegemony of the market then innovation might be stifled and unique cinematic voices might end up being silenced (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 84-85). Treffry-Goatley's assertion that the existing national audience has changed little since apartheid also causes substantial problems in relation to cinematic expression, as filmmakers might have to work within the "hegemonic national discourse of reconciliation and multiculturalism" in order to attract said audience (2010: 85).

Treffry-Goatley also notes that in the aforementioned interview with Mbalo and Haidarian it emerged that the NFVF likes to fund projects that promote diversity and reconciliation (2010: 85). Dovey argues that while many South African filmmakers choose to engage with the discourses of "critique and reconciliation" in their films, at the same time some filmmakers simply follow the available funding (2009: 55). For example, filmmaker Sechaba Morojele argues that a number of cinematic adaptations of South African literature emerged as a result of the NFVF specifically allocating funding for adaptations (ibid.). In the case of adaptations of Truth and Reconciliation literature, Morojele also raises the question as to why literary texts written by white South Africans such as Gillian Slovo's *Red Dust* (2000) and Antjie Krog's *Country of My Skull* (1998) are deemed the most appropriate to film when just as many black testimonies about the TRC exist (ibid.). He argues that writers of South African adaptations continue to need to use white intermediaries in order to gain funding and that this is a continuation of the same situation that manifested itself in the 1980s with anti-apartheid films like *A Dry White Season* (1989) and *Cry Freedom* (1987) (ibid.).

Filmmaker Teddy Mattera also takes issue with the NFVF's allocation to 'reconciliation' films as he believes that many black South African filmmakers want to explore "residual anger and the limits of reconciliation", but that investors are not interested in these kinds of topics (Dovey, 2007: 147). Thus the NFVF's recent focus upon commercialism and selling the rainbow nation ideal to overseas territories has potentially damaging effects because Sediba "has almost become a prerequisite for NFVF funding" (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 82) Furthermore, Young argues that:

Another side effect of the Sediba ethos is that without NFVF buy-in on some level it makes it harder for local producers to find funding elsewhere. As a first-time filmmaker, without the NFVF one has very little chance of accessing funding from the DTI or Industrial Development Corporation; beyond that, international film funds seldom look at co-funding projects that do not have buy-in from their local funding body (2013: online resource)

6. Suleman and Peterson: Against the Rainbow

The previous chapter explored some of the various issues that have characterised the post-apartheid film funding environment. It was shown that a number of factors, such as poor audience development and funding bodies' emphasis upon attracting international investment, have had the unfortunate effect of preventing some potential cinematic texts from even developing past the initial scripting phase. At this point, it is useful to begin to look beyond the broader economic context and closer at how a film's content interacts with the discourses of Rainbowism. To aid in this task, the chapter to follow shall use two films directed by Ramadan Suleman as case studies.

6.1. Ramadan Suleman

Maingard writes that the films of director Ramadan Suleman and his frequent collaborator screenwriter Bhekiziwe Peterson are unique in the South African context because they resist easy attempts at closure (2007: 166). The fact that the pair saturates their films with an ambiguity that does not lead to easy answers or stereotypical readings also renders them incredibly unique in this context (2007: 166). Suleman and Peterson attempt to explore the complexity that comes from having a South African identity and try to explore new ways of seeing "South African-ness" in the post-apartheid context (ibid.).

Their films reject the discourses of the rainbow nation, as well as many of the motifs of redemption and forgiveness that have become synonymous with many post-apartheid films that deal with the apartheid past (Dovey, 2007: 147). Dovey defines the general character of the pair's films as being one in which "no amount of forgiveness can bring redemption" because "the damage has already been done" (ibid.). Instead the camera's focus is upon the black communities of South Africa and their attempts to rediscover their dignity and reaffirm the humanity which apartheid tried to take from them (ibid.).

Suleman's career is defined by a decidedly internationalist streak, he was born in Durban in 1955 and has been living in France since the 1980s (Botha, 2012: 185; Ukadike, 2002: 281). He comes from a theatrical background having been a founding member of the Dhlomo Theatre in the early 1980s, which was the first black theatre in South Africa (Botha, 2012: 185). After the theatre was closed by the apartheid authorities in the middle of the 1980s, he studied film in South Africa and France (ibid.). He also comes from a unique filmmaking background because "unlike the majority of South African filmmakers, who have little or no knowledge of African cinema" he has worked with renowned African filmmakers such as Med Hondo from Mauritania and Souleymane Cisse from Mali (Dovey, 2009: 70). Dovey argues that these experiences have led to Suleman shaping his own style of filmmaking that uses the aesthetic and ideological frameworks of West African cinema to tell South African stories (ibid.).

This vastly different background often leads to Suleman's work being analysed through auteurist frameworks, a somewhat ironic situation considering Suleman himself has spoken out against what he feels is the dictatorial control that African directors hold over their sets (Suleman in Ukadike, 2002: 282). He also feels that filmmaking should be more of a collaborative endeavour (ibid.). Maingard defines Suleman's work in a similar fashion as she credits Suleman's frequent collaborator Bhekiziwe Peterson with an equal share of the creative credit in the films the pair have worked on (Maingard, 2007: 166). This chapter shall be taking a similar approach by considering Peterson's writings and opinions to be just as definitive as those which Suleman has given.

6.2 Fools (1997)

The duo's first feature film, *Fools*, was an adaptation of Njabulo S. Ndebele's 1983 novella of the same name. The film was an international co-production with many different partners; the co-production status was necessitated predominantly because there were substantial difficulties in raising capital for the project (Modisane, 2013: 132). Barlet argues that "Suleman found it difficult to secure funding from producers who thought that he was too critical of Africans" (Cited in Modisane, 2013: 132).

Fools was the first post apartheid film to be directed by a black South African, Modisane links this to the celebration of "firsts" that swept the South African public imagination in the 1990s (ibid.). *Fools* is important in that it is representative of black South Africans finally assuming some of the principal roles of cinematic production in the country (ibid.). In this sense, it is aligned with the broader celebration of the unconditional re-entry of black South Africans into the country's public life (ibid.).

Another interesting facet surrounding *Fools*' status as a "first black" cultural text, is that it is one of the first films to address a black audience directly without any discernable political pressure or the looming threat of censorship (Modisane, 2013: 133). The "openness of engagement" which emerged in the post-apartheid context finally allowed this type of cinema to emerge (ibid.). Modisane finds *Fools* particularly interesting in that it is an "auteurist film that stands at a critical distance from dominant articulations of a triumphalist nationalism" (2013: 128). Whether *Fools* is an example of auteur cinema or not is of lesser importance to the rest of that statement. The assertion that *Fools* is a text that stands apart from the triumphant nationalism of this period allows one to explore whether *Fools* is a text that was formulated in response to Rainbowism.

This seems to be the case, because in an interview with Ukadike in 2002, Suleman asserted that he felt a cognitive dissonance between the rhetoric of the rainbow nation and the everyday poverty and misery that he continued to see saturating post-apartheid society (293). Thus he believed that the idea of the rainbow nation was simply a slogan that politicians used to try and avoid dealing with this entrenched and intractable poverty leftover from apartheid (ibid.). He went on to say that for him:

Fools is some kind of warning to the politicians not to look for easy answers to society's problems. The amount of damage done to our people by apartheid is immense. We must look for practical long term ways of resolving those issues instead of only saying we are a rainbow nation, which could be misread to mean that in South Africa, blacks and whites are on equal terms (ibid.).

Suleman also expressed a concern about the lack of a critical cinema in that same interview; he said that he believed that "filmmakers are scared to confront the urban political and economic

situation of their countries because they fear being sanctioned. Hence they opt for the easy way out by making apolitical films" (in Ukadike, 2002: 285). Thus *Fools* can be seen a markedly political film that was made in response to the Rainbowism of the time.

Magogodi argues that *Fools* acts to destabilise the sense of collective identity by focussing upon "protagonists who exist on the margins of such an identity" (2002: 244). In this respect, it bears some similarity to the Oliver Schmitz film *Mapantsula* (1988) because both films focus upon black antiheroes who attain some level of political awakening (ibid.). However, the anti-heroic traits of petty criminal Panic in *Mapantsula* are shifted in *Fools* and subsequently find representation in the character of the township teacher Zamani (ibid.). While teaching is sometimes considered a noble and dignified profession, the character of Zamani is a profoundly unlikeable wretch who earns the viewer's utter contempt. He is a drunken lecher who finds himself on the fringes of his community because he has raped one of his students (ibid.). Magogodi argues that the act of placing a rapist as the central protagonist of the story forces the viewer to question how the black community has been represented in South African cinema up to this point in time (ibid.). Zamani subsequently becomes an entry point "to accessing individual identities within that elusive collective called the people" (ibid.).

In one scene, Zamani is shown as suffering from impotence when he tries to engage in coitus with a sex worker in an alley (Magogodi, 2003: 191). Magogodi argues that it is possible to see Zamani's sexual impotence in political terms, in much the same way that one could do a political reading of the impotence of El Hadji in Ousmane Sembene's classic African film, *Xala* (1974) (2003: 190). Magogodi argues that in *Fools* Zamani's body is punished with sterility for his sins (2003: 192). He argues that this sterility is meant to underscore the broader political and moral sterility of teachers during the struggle against apartheid (Magogodi, 2003: 191). In this sense, this is a similar strategy to that which Sembene uses in *Xala* where "El Hadji's sexual impotence is symbolic of the failure of the new ruling elite to overhaul the oppressive and exploitative social conditions" (Magogodi, 2003: 192). The link between sexual impotency and political impotency is not the only interesting link between *Fools* and motifs that are usually found in wider African cinemas. It is possible to see a variation of the comedic archetype of the

"debarque" (been to) in the character of the school principle, Meneer. The "debarque", is essentially a term used to describe a mentally-colonised character who valorises the West (usually France) and tries to emulate Western standards to the point of absurdity (Tcheuyap, 2011: 50). Tcheuyap says that "African filmmakers almost always represent these figures, although they often wield power, as victims, allowing spectators to laugh at them and thereby reclaim some of their power" (ibid.).

While in Francophone African Cinema the debarque character mostly valorises France, in *Fools*, Meneer valorises White Afrikaner nationalist culture to the point of absurdity. Magogodi notes the ironic fate that befalls the principle, he gets whipped by the white man at the end of the film because he was too excessive in celebrating a holiday that "foregrounds assumed white superiority over blacks" (2002: 254). In this respect, the comeuppance Meneer receives, allows black audience members to laugh and cathartically reclaim some of the power which they lost to apartheid functionaries like Meneer. This interpretation of Meneer as a debarque-type character that serves a cathartic purpose in the narrative is not shared by some scholars. An example would be Luc Renders, who argued that that Meneer is a caricature, one that emerges as a result of the film being a poor cinematic adaptation that turned all the novella's subtleties into a "series of overstatements" (2007: 249). The fact that Meneer is shown to a rabid nationalist party supporter in the year 1989 also raises Renders ire because he asserts that ANC comrades would never have tolerated such blatant pro-government behaviour during the height of the struggle (ibid.).

However, Renders' view somewhat misses the point because the year is not particularly important in the grand scheme of the film. This is because as Suleman asserted in an interview with Barlet in 1995, *Fools* was chosen as a project because Ndebele's novella explored the "psychological sequels of a system inscribed in a 'History' that began long before apartheid" (Cited in Modisane, 2013: 136). "Psychological sequels" in Modisane's understanding are the recurring traumas that black South Africans have faced as a result of "colonial oppression, and gendered and racial capitalism" (2013: 136). In this regard, psychological sequels continue to resonate well into the post-apartheid era for Suleman, therefore the film's concerns can be seen to "antedate and even postdate the apartheid system" (ibid.).

In this regard, the character of "Forgive Me" is also a very interesting presence in the film; he is a homeless veteran of the Second World War who is occasionally heard shouting the refrain "Father forgive them!" (Maingard, 2007: 167). Magogodi argues that he represents a re-appropriation of Christianity (2002: 252). Christianity has a long history of having been used as legitimating myth in service to colonial projects in the South African context (ibid.). Especially in the context of Afrikaner nationalism, with the Calvinist state casting the descendants of the Dutch settlers as the chosen people of God (ibid.). The fact that he continues to wear his old army helmet, also locates his body in a particular historical context as a survivor of the Second World War (ibid.). Magogodi asserts that in this sense:

The body of Forgive Me can be read as a historical document of the false promise of freedom made by the British and South African governments who had asked Africans to join the war against Hitler. After the war it is the Dutch settlers who were to retain the spoils, while the likes of Forgive Me are left in tatters as signified by the torn garments that cover his body (ibid.)

Therefore, Forgive Me represents the "return of the repressed" in that he shows that the history of degradation for black South Africans goes back a very long way (ibid.). Forgive Me also perhaps serves as a warning to contemporary black viewers that the liberationist narratives found within Christianity, and the promises of freedom that were given to those who fought Hitler did not manifest into genuine freedoms for black South Africans. Therefore, Forgive Me might be reference to the need for black South Africans not to get caught up in the triumphant nationalism of the halo-period, and that the best course of action is to tread lightly going forward.

This ties into one of the main messages of *Fools*, one which Suleman and Peterson sought to impart upon black South African viewers, namely, the necessity of introspection in the black community (Modisane, 2013: 135). However, Modisane argues that this introspection is defined as going beyond seeing South African history as a dichotomy of black and white confrontation (2013: 135). In an interview before *Fools* was even made, Suleman asserted that "*Fools* will not be a film about the eternal conflict between the 'diabolical' white and the 'magnificent' black, but simply a film about the black South African people of just four years ago" (Cited in Modisane,

2013: 135). Modisane argues that Suleman's cinematic endeavours were motivated by a quest to subvert the "fixed adversarial images in the racial imagination of both the apartheid state, and some of its opponents" (Modisane, 2013: 135). In this regard, it becomes possible to view Suleman as a filmmaker who seeks to denaturalise the identity myths of apartheid, myths that were premised upon each group valorising itself while denigrating "the other" (Reid, 2011: 7). This introspection is thus "cognisant of racial conflict, but disavows it" (ibid.).

This is seen at the end of *Fools* when the Dingaan's Day celebrations are interrupted by a white man whose car was struck by an errant rock. The white man takes his rage out on Zamani, but the fallen teacher is able to withstand the pain of the horse whip, a pain which Suleman calls "symbolic of the 350 years of suffering black South Africans have endured" (in Ukadike, 2002: 294). Suleman argues that the white man is rendered powerless by Zamani's laughter and the decision to let the white man live implies that he will hopefully will come to regret his deeds and change his ways (in Ukadike, 2002: 295). This is also the likely reason as to why the debarque character of Meneer is not killed or maimed in the film. Suleman summarises this non-violent ending thusly:

It is basically saying to South Africans that throwing stones or using a gun is not the only way left for us to deal with our current problems. We wanted to state that there could always be alternatives (ibid.).

In this respect, Suleman believes that the issue at hand is that black people have to come to grips with their history before they can start to come to grips with white people (in Ukadike, 2002: 293).

6.3 Fools as an Exemplar for the Future

The fact that *Fools* is set in Soweto in 1989, creates a certain amount of incongruence in the minds of those who are familiar with the historical images of turmoil and political violence that are most often associated with black townships in the 1980s. When one considers that the chaotic nature of the 1980s has often been stressed in various accounts regarding that era, the images one sees in *Fools* might appear strange to the post-apartheid viewer. In this respect, *Fools* can be

seen as creating a synecdoche of the apartheid township experience in order to avoid Rainbowism-affirming contrasts between the chaos of the 1980s and the relative peace that the audiences of the late 1990s were experiencing during the halo-period.

This refusal to make things easier for potential viewers in the late 1990s allows one to read the film as employing something of an archival tendency. In the chapters above it was shown that the existing South African audiences in the immediate post-apartheid era were still revelling in rainbow nationalism. As a result of this situation, these audiences were not yet ready (or perhaps unwilling) to engage with the type of discourses that a subversive film such as *Fools* was putting forth. Therefore as Modisane asserts, the "circulation of *Fools* and its public discursivity were constrained by the existing conventions of film distribution in South Africa" (2013: 145). However just because a film does not make much of an impact on audiences when it first comes out, it does not mean that it will not have value in the future. *Fools* has the potential to be utilised as a cinematic resource by South African filmmakers in the future who might be interested in making films about the apartheid past. It is a rare example of a film made during the Halo-period that does not utilise the conventions of Rainbowism, this enables one to read it as adding to the multiplicity of cinematic texts about the apartheid past. A multiplicity of texts about the past helps to prevent narratives from crystallising and becoming narrow in terms of how people engage with the past in the present (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 72).

In essence, *Fools* can be seen as a cinematic text that other filmmakers (who might not be interested in Rainbowist themes and aesthetics) can draw upon or perhaps build upon in creating their own motion pictures about the apartheid past. In a sense, *Fools* can be seen to be performing this type of action already because in one sequence in which Zamani is shown walking through the township, the camera roams and captures small fragments of the daily lives of the township's inhabitants with a wedding being shown. This sequence is very interesting for those who have seen Lionel Rogosin's 1959 film *Come Back, Africa*. In Rogosin's film there is a very similar sequence in which Zacharia and his wife are walking through the streets of the Soffiatown Township. The camera seemingly wanders and we see a cross-section of township life; there is couple having an argument, street musicians playing music and a big wedding taking place.

Therefore, a viewer who is familiar with both of these films might make this connection. While there is the possibility that the similarities are coincidences there is also the potential to see *Fools* as building upon antecedent texts in order to counter-act the rainbowist discourses which sees the past as something that everyone experienced in the same way and which the nation moved on from as a collective (Peterson, 2009: 23). The fact that everybody "knows" the basic details of the traumatic past also does not preclude the discussion of those events. In *Fools*, this facet is embodied by a conversation that Zamani and his wife Nosipho have regarding his proclivities. The fallen teacher asks his wife "I thought put this matter behind us?" to which his wife replies: "When we never even talked about it?"

The question of speaking about the past, and in what form such a conversation should take place and between whom, became the subject of Suleman and Peterson's 2004 feature film *Zulu Love Letter*.

6.4 Zulu Love Letter (2004)

Zulu Love Letter was one of four feature films released in 2004 which dealt in some way with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Dovey, 2009: 54). The film was a co-production between South African and France which was made with support from the NFVF and the European Union ACP Cinema Fund (Moyer-Duncan, 2011: 71). The film only had a return of R140, 062 after a modest release on seven screens but it prompted a significant amount of debate in the media and in film circles (ibid.).

The film's writer Bhekiziwe Peterson started writing the film in about 1998, the year of *Fools'* South African release (Peterson, 2009: 19; Modisane, 2013: 143). He claims that during this period, the term "transition" was floating around the political landscape as South Africans were repeatedly told that the country was in the midst of a transition (2009: 19). Peterson argues that government's decision to foster national unity and a sense of nationhood amongst the diverse groups that made up contemporary South Africa was unsurprising (ibid.). However, he argues

that the idea of a rainbow nation and the "aspiration of reconciliation" which were extolled in pursuit of creating national unity had serious flaws (ibid.). He argues that:

... the invocation of a nation that is „united in its diversity“ did not allow, as an ideal, for any sustained and meaningful wrestling with the politics of race and inequality, both in the past and in the present (ibid.).

Furthermore, Peterson argues that the continual invocation of a diverse and unified nation was "consistent with the dominance of whiteness" (ibid.). By "whiteness" Peterson is referring to the "reproduction of white cultural values, political assumptions and privileges as normative" (ibid.). Peterson goes on to say that the political changes the country had experienced were "glossed over as a miracle" and there was a sense that continuing problems would eventually resolve themselves (ibid.). In this respect, Peterson asserts that he and Suleman agreed that the narrative of *Zulu Love Letter* had to "explore concerns that were in danger of being ignored, repressed or glossed over because they went against the grain of the „feel-good' mantras of the new dispensation" (2009: 20).

The question for Peterson was how nation-building was to progress beyond simply an ideal if South African society continues to repress and deny the manifold societal problems that emerged as a result of the past (ibid.). He believed that the problems in South African society are unlikely to be overcome if citizens are not granted both space and time to address their personal and parochial anxieties in ways "that are not necessarily consistent with or parallel to the initiatives and needs of the larger society" (Peterson, 2009: 23). It becomes apparent that Peterson was engaging with Rainbowism, albeit he did not call it such.

Zulu Love Letter can in this sense be seen as a cinematic text that seeks to stand apart from the rainbowist tendency to see the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as having been wholly successful mechanism that dealt with the effects of the apartheid past in their totality. The film has as its protagonist, Thandeka Khumalo, a journalist in post-apartheid South Africa who is struggling to harmonise her own struggle experiences with the "collective amnesia" of the

society around her (Dovey, 2009: 54). She finds herself alienated in the new South Africa because she is unable to pretend that everything is fine as she sees continuities with the past everywhere (Peterson in McCluskey, 2009: 168).

Thandeka is visited by Me'Tau, the mother of Dineo, she asks Thandeka to help her to try and find where Dineo's body is buried. Dineo was a young activist who was assassinated by the security police, an act which Thandeka witnessed and one that was caught on film by her photographer colleague, Michael Peters (Maingard, 2007: 171). Maingard notes how the character of Me'Tau uses the metaphor of thousands of souls roaming the land because their bones have not been found (ibid.). She argues that:

... this is a parable for the broader national spirit. With apartheid's atrocities and brutalities unresolved in the hearts and souls of the nation's people there cannot be reparation and the future cannot be free. This story becomes representative therefore of a national story that is central to the country's future (Maingard, 2007: 169)

The security police eventually got a hold of both Thandeka and Peters; they subsequently tortured Thandeka and fatally poisoned Peters (Maingard, 2007: 175). Thandeka was pregnant at the time and the beating she endured resulted in her child, Simangaliso, being born deaf (ibid.). Maingard argues that Simangaliso's deafness shows that even the new generation's lives continue to be effected by the apartheid past (2007: 169). She goes on to say that "the film weaves intricate webs between the past, the present and the future through the lives of its characters" (ibid.).

In this respect, Suleman and Peterson's film continues with the theme of black introspection which they began with *Fools*. *Zulu Love Letter* does not follow the patterns of other feature films about South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation commission which emerged during this period (Kruger, 2012: 138). It does not present an array of villainous white Afrikaner stereotypes and magical black South Africans with almost superhuman powers of forgiveness as found in John Boorman's 2004 film *In My Country*. Neither does it rely on white protagonist coming from outside (or returning) to the country as found in Tom Hooper's film *Red Dust* (2004), or a local white protagonist as found in Ian Gabriel's *Forgiveness* (2004) for that matter (Kruger, 2012:

139). Kruger argues that *Zulu Love Letter* does not concern itself with the feelings of the white police officers who killed Dineo and numerous other political activists, these particular perpetrators are shown as still being able to kill and destroy with impunity even in the mid-1990s (2012: 138). Rather the film forgoes a discourse of reconciliation between black and white South Africans and instead focuses upon the potential for reconciliation amongst the black community (ibid.).

This is symbolised by the relationship between Me'Tau and the black former policeman, Dhlamini, who now runs a store and lives a relatively "ordinary" life as a husband and a father (Kruger, 2012: 140). The focus upon Dhlamini's back-story, who as a black policeman was also a technically a victim of apartheid as well being complicit in the human rights abuses, complicates the audience's potential ability to make impromptu moral judgments about his character. Me'Tau's persistent efforts to meet him, inspires Dhlamini to park his car outside her house one night and wait throughout the night (Kruger, 2012: 142). Kruger summarises the scene thusly:

Understandably, Me'Tau considers his behavior a threat to her and her surviving daughter. But the film suggests a more complex understanding of the characters when the camera cuts back and forth between the two women hiding in the dark house, afraid of Dhlamini's potential violence against them, and Dhlamini who continues to listen to *Song of Solomon* in his car. Perhaps the biblical narrative of love and devotion is intended to inspire the courage he will need to confess his culpability to Me'Tau (2012: 142)

He gets out of the car and starts to walk towards Me'Tau's house, but he stops halfway and lingers in the middle of the road for a while before heading back to his car and driving off (Kruger, 2012: 142). Kruger argues that it is possible to read this scene as the Dhlamini's first tentative steps towards a "different relationship with his past and those he victimized" (ibid.).

Thandeka's engagements with the wounds of the past play out in a different way to Me'Tau's. While she had supported Me'Tau's application to investigate what happened to Dineo's body, at the beginning of the film she was shown as having personally rejected the TRC as a mechanism to address South Africa's violent past, with her going so far as to tell her daughter Simangaliso that she won't testify before the commission because "[n]othing can compensate [her] for what

[she] went through. And there is no talk of either arresting them or paying the abused families” (Kruger, 2012: 140). Towards the end of the film when she arrives at the Tau house the day after the Tau's incident with Dhlamini, she discovers that there is wake being held for Dineo and she also finds out from Dineo's sister that this has been a monthly occurrence since Dineo went missing (Maingard, 2007: 169). Thandeka's conversation with Mapule is worth quoting in full for the benefit of the engagement that shall be taking place in the next paragraph:

Mapule: Ke kopa o buwe le Mme [Please talk to my mother] we can't turn back now ... I mean I can't take it anymore, I just can't take living in this house full of mourning and sadness, can't live in a house with a permanent wake.

Thandeka: You know why your mother's concerned, don't you? Your sister's story is my story. It is the story of so many families and so is the courage and love that you have shown. I've been meaning to testify myself. You want to end the wake in the house ... I need to end the wake in my head. I've written and said so much about what is happening around me. Now I need to write about what's happened to me. This thing it is so big, so frightening, and no one knows where it will lead. Your mother is scared that if she goes through with this she will lose you. I'm scared that if I don't go through with this, I will lose myself ... and Simangaliso (Peterson & Suleman, 2009: 110).

Throughout the film, Thandeka's memories of her past experiences had broken through her subconscious and significantly effected her life in the present (Maingard, 2007: 171). Thus Thandeka sees the TRC as a means of possibly "ending the wake in [her] head" and helping her to build a better relationship with her daughter. This is a marked contrast to other films about this period in South African history, as Thandeka's "need to write about what's happened to [her]" is not connected to forging national unity so much as familial unity in the face of a terrible past. However, the comment that Dineo's story is also her story also positions Thandeka's personal experience within the broader national story (Maingard, 2007: 175). The film thus highlighted the TRC's value within a wider context of black communities coming to terms with themselves and their experiences. In this respect, the film accepts the TRC as a mechanism for coming to terms with what happened but at the same time it is cognisant of the TRC's limitations.

However, this affirmation of the TRC as having public value does not erase the other problems plaguing post-apartheid society. In the post-apartheid South Africa of *Zulu Love Letter*, the past is a septic wound that is still claiming victims. Towards the end of the film, Moola, the character that is most well adjusted to the new South Africa, is tragically killed in a staged car accident

which was presumably orchestrated by one of Dineo's assassins (ibid.). After Thandeka arrives at the scene she is filled with rage and grief when she sees the carnage and learns that Simangaliso is missing. She drives to the large house of Councillor Khubeka in the middle of the night and demands to speak with him. Kruger argues that Khubeka "not only represents the new political dispensation but, as a former activist and present TRC member, is also symbolically linked to the past and to the (ideal) future" (2012: 142). In the conversation between the two, the metaphorical gap between politicians and those they serve is illustrated by Thandeka's demand for some-form of retributive justice and Khubeka's well-intentioned but empty platitudes about the "truth coming out".

However, Peterson argues that the "unfinished and messy business of apartheid, does not lend itself to tidy solutions" (2009: 22) Thus by the by end of the film Dineo's bones still haven't been found, but Me'Tau is joined by Thandeka and the mothers of other murdered activists in performing a cleansing ceremony at the farm where Dineo's body and many others were burned beyond recognition (Moyer-Duncan, 2011: 71; Peterson & Suleman, 2009: 120). It remains unclear about whether "either woman will further pursue their case against the police officers by testifying before the TRC" or whether those who killed Moola will ever face justice (Moyer-Duncan, 2011: 71).

In this respect, Kruger argues that the film recognises that even a somewhat compromised institution with serious problems can be reclaimed to some extent by those "who have been violently silenced by an authoritarian regime" (2012: 140-141). Thus Me'Tau and Thandeka will potentially reclaim the TRC as a "medium through which private pain can enter public awareness" (ibid.). However, the journey towards healing and reconciliation has only just begun for these characters (ibid.).

7. Rainbowism and the South African Gangster Film

7.1 Jerusalema: Hijacking the Rainbow

This chapter argues that it is possible to define Ralph Ziman's 2008 Gangster film, *Jerusalema*, according to the wider category of "crime fiction" in Africa which Tcheuyap writes about (2011, 106). "Crime fiction" is a very broad term which includes film noirs; police procedurals, cop films, gangster films and various other examples (ibid.). The width of the genre of crime fiction makes it difficult to articulate a definition which "encompasses several historical, theoretical, and even cultural periods" (ibid.). Leitch defines the standard "crime film" as following common structural patterns:

Every crime story predicates leading roles: the criminal who commits the crime, the victim who suffers it, and the avenger or detective who investigates it in the hope of bringing the criminal to justice and establishing the social order the crime had disrupted (2002: 13).

This type of narrative organisation, involves a set group of formulaic conventions and stock characters, which is typical of most "mainstream" cinemas (Tcheuyap, 2011: 106). While some crime film genres, such as the hard-boiled detective story might be critical of the system which it represents, it also presupposes that a specific social order exists (ibid.). Namely, that there is something of a natural order where all institutions generally function as they should on paper where "the state is responsible for and guarantees the welfare of the citizens" and "the police and lawyers enforce legal rules and protect the vulnerable" (ibid.). Tcheuyap argues that structurally, the majority of crime films end by reinstituting the disrupted order (ibid.). This is a narrative construction that makes the crime film genre ultimately conservative (ibid.). Yet, filmmakers in Africa have generally been able to adopt Hollywood genres with more or less success (ibid.). O'Regan asserts that various national cinemas have managed to "carve a space both locally and internationally for themselves in the face of a dominant international cinema" which obviously exists in the form of Hollywood (1996, 1). Filmmakers in Africa have succeeded in making genres indigenous to their film industries by reworking them according to their own cultural sensibilities (Tcheuyap, 2011: 107).

Tcheuyap argues that in the post-colonial African context the dramatisation or examination of crime "becomes synonymous with determining a political economy of death and its new redistribution between the upper and the lower echelons of the social ladder: the state has lost its entitlement to kill and deliver justice" (ibid.). In many post-colonial African countries the state is no longer seen as being a fully legitimate entity in the eyes of the people because the *commandement* becomes fractured, the *commandement* refers to a ruling system in post-colonial societies which according to Achille Mbembe:

... embraces the images and structures of power and coercion, the instruments and agents of their enactment, and a degree of rapport between those who give orders and those who are supposed to obey (Without, of course, discussing) them (2001: 134).

Thus as Tcheuyap argues, in a context in which the institutional apparatus is the "prime criminal" it is difficult to affirm Leitch's statement that the crime film's central function is "to allow viewers to experience the vicarious thrills of criminal behavior leaving them free to condemn this behavior, whoever is practicing it" (Tcheuyap, 2011: 118; Leitch, 2002: 306). While the South African state might not bear as much antipathy from its people as other states in Africa, the trenchant criticisms of post-apartheid society levelled against the state in *Jerusalema* raise questions specifically about the status of Rainbowism as a dominant discourse.

In 2010, the film's director Ralph Ziman called *Jerusalema* the "the first film of the Zuma generation" (Lehman, 2011: 114). A reference to the controversial Jacob G. Zuma, the President of South Africa who entered the Presidency under a cloud of corruption allegations and various other controversies. Ziman later told the online journalist Brendon Connelly:

From the outside, South Africa is always being given a rosy view by the world media. I understand why they do it, and I'm glad they do it. But I think from the inside, while we were making it, you sensed there was a lot of dissatisfaction with (Thabo) Mbeki's government, with the ANC, with the fact that 15 years after the end of apartheid, poor people were poorer and worse off than ever before economically, and rich people were richer than they'd ever been. (2010: online resource).

Lehman argues that Ziman makes an explicit case for the film to be read as a political critique of economic imbalance in the second decade of South Africa's democracy (2011: 114). However it

is also an example of South African counter-cinema which utilises Hollywood or 1st Cinema conventions to attract a wide audience, an audience who would come for the action and leave having had the linguistic signifiers of the post-apartheid state emptied of significance as a result of the continuous ironic usage in the cinematic text (Saks, 2010: 159; De Villiers, 2009: 15).

However, in order to explore the variation of Rainbowism that *Jerusalema* is seeking to counter through its cinematic representations, one needs to briefly explore some facets of the gangster genre. Robert Warshow's famous essay *The Gangster as Tragic Hero* served as the framework that Jack Shadoian would elaborate upon in his 1977 essay *Dreams and Dead Ends: The American Gangster/Crime Film* (Govender, 2011: 8). Shadoian's argument was that that the structure inherent in the gangster film is "ready made for certain kinds of concerns" (ibid.). These concerns were tied into the discourse of "American Dream" and the contradictions therein (ibid.). "The American Dream" is all about the drive to succeed in a capitalist sense, it also contains within it the ideals of a society that is essentially classless where every individual is free and equal (ibid.). This contradiction becomes apparent when one considers the fact that a society in which an individual can "have it all" and rise above everybody else to succeed then the society cannot be classless at the same time (ibid.). Govender argues that the gangster film can be adapted to different national contexts, but the figure of the gangster remains an enduring and effective way to explore the aspirations inherent in a particular socio-historical context, and the forces that seek to punish or limit those aspirations (2011: 10).

The "South African dream" in this context can be seen as an extension of the idea of the rainbow nation; it is much like the American Dream in that both myths are accompanied by the capitalist idea that everyone has opportunity to succeed if they work hard (Govender, 2011: 8). But just like "American Dream" the invocation of the rainbow nation serves to imply equality in the present that does not take into account the way historical events and the legacy of racism still effects the present.

When Lucky starts his telling his story for the journalist in the beginning of the film, he contextualises his rise to infamy in terms of the post-apartheid moment which began in 1994 with the first democratic elections (Govender, 2011: 89). The viewer sees a montage of news

footage set to Nkosi Sikel' iAfrica during this sequence (ibid.). This helps the viewer to get the impression that there was genuine sense of hope during these early days (ibid.). The newness of the country is made apparent by Lucky's voiceover narration:

"Freedom... a new South Africa... a new dawn... a new day... a fresh start... a clean page... a new beginning... and I had dreams. The dreams were the security system of the black urban economy. My best friend Zakes and I were sucking that blood, selling peanuts for peanuts. However, free enterprise was never encouraged."

Thus the opportunities and some of the contradictions of the new South Africa become apparent from the very beginning of the film (Govender, 2011: 90). Lucky bought into the discourses of the rainbow nation in which supposedly anyone can achieve their dreams regardless of their ethnicity, skin colour or background (ibid.). The statement that "free enterprise was never encouraged" is thus ironic because according to Govender, "it was precisely the idea that anyone could now be an entrepreneur that the new dispensation promised" (ibid.). Lucky does not start out as a criminal; he does everything that is usually attributed to getting onto the road to financial success. He is shown as studying hard at school, avoiding trouble and applying for a place at a University (ibid.). However, when it came time for the opportunities that were promised him to come to fruition, he finds out that there is no financial aid to allow him to follow his dreams at University and escape poverty (ibid.). Thus the larger contradictions of the "New South Africa" are revealed as the opportunity for a better life is there for some, but Lucky is prevented from grasping at it because of circumstances beyond his control (ibid.). Thus a fresh break from the effects of the apartheid past never comes for Lucky Kunene and many others of his generation. It is possible to see this situation as a commentary on how one's race still affects one's economic potential even though the formal structures of apartheid have gone.

Lucky's road to the criminal life was paved with promises of what "the post 1994 neo-liberal society told him he could be and could achieve" (Govender, 2011: 92). Thus Lucky "has been the victim of a system that needs people to be at the bottom in order for there to be a top" (ibid.). Govender argues that Lucky knows that can never get to the top through living as a legal citizen, because the "South African dream" much like the "American Dream" is full of contradictions (ibid.).

Lesley Marx argues that much of the film's effectiveness emerges from an "astute and unnervingly funny attack on South African Newspeak" (2010: 274). In this respect, the film's dialogue and voiceover exposition is laden with slogans and phrases that have infiltrated South African public discourse during the halo-period (Govender, 2011: 93). Thus Lucky becomes fluent in the way the new South Africa has been linguistically constructed (ibid.). However, he realises that these words associated with the halo-period have in many cases been utilised without any action to back them up (ibid.). Therefore, he adopts them "to run the same scam as the people who have been scamming him and the masses" (ibid.).

When Lucky is arrested by his nemesis, the ironically named Blakkie Swart, who Lehmann defines as a "full-scale, unreconstructed apartheid racist, pining for the good old days when he could crack black heads with impunity" (2011: 117). His lawyer, Lucas Sithole says that "it is convenient for the government to blame Kunene. The government has failed dismally to provide the houses they promised the people" (Govender, 2011: 93). Thus the state's failure is one that Lucky takes full advantage off to achieve his own dreams at the expense of the poor and marginalised he was once a part of (ibid.). Govender notes that the film is cognisant of the fact that the discourses of "transformation and restitution can be used both cynically and sincerely in the current ideological climate" (ibid.).

7. 2 Nazareth: The Discarded Spear of the Nation

The hot-headed character of Nazareth is very interesting as he represents both a segment of society whose voice has been silenced by Rainbowism in the new South Africa, and a character that has been marginalised by the changes in the way national identity is defined.

De Villiers argues that *Jerusalema* positions itself against a discursive backdrop of the character of the gangster developing a political or ethical consciousness (2009: 8). *Mapantsula* showed Panic's political awakening, while in *Tsotsi* the main character developed an "ethical awareness" (ibid.). He goes on to say that in the new South Africa, "anti-systematic behaviour" that once could once have been justified when attached to revolutionary aims, has no such place in the

post-revolutionary context of post-apartheid South Africa (de Villiers, 2009: 8). This situation underlies Nazareth's central problem, he was trained as a weapon to fight a war for "the nation" and when he came back to South Africa, the conceptualisation of "the nation" was swiftly expanded to include former adversaries who did not have to give up anything while he remained poor (Govender, 2011: 82). The incongruity between these two states of being causes Nazareth significant anger; he states in a conversation with Nigerian Crime Boss Tony Ngu that "they told us we were going to punish these whities. We were going to take from them" (ibid.). However, Nazareth is not only angry because of his lack of reconditioning and his residual anger towards his white compatriots, he also feels:

... ousted from the lineage of the ruling party as the spoils of the "New South Africa" have not gone to him and other former ANC soldiers, who have been ignored or glossed over in the history of the country in favour of a more united and reconciliatory ethos. While politicians and businessmen have benefited from liberation Nazareth, and former ANC soldiers like him, have been cast aside (Govender, 2011: 82)

Barlet argues that *Jerusalema* adopts "all the gimmicks of the action film" and that it offers the viewer "efficient Hollywood-style images, wham-bam editing and a hunky hero" (2010: 112). He goes on to say that the main problem he sees with the film is the way it conforms to stereotypes, with the violence Nazareth displays and Ngu's nationality linked intrinsically to already existing stereotypes currently associated with anti-black racism and xenophobia respectively (Barlet, 2010: 112). Barlet believes that by "portraying townships as lawless hoods" the film ignores the "violence of apartheid which so destroyed the country" (ibid.).

This opinion contrasts strongly with that of Barry Ronge, the most well known movie reviewer in South Africa, who argues that the violence in *Jerusalema* raises a series of vital questions about South Africa's particularly violent history, he says that:

Ziman is not just making a crime thriller but touching on a culture of lawless acquisitiveness rooted deeply in South Africa's colonial and apartheid history and culture. How does Lucky Kunene in Hillbrow in 2008, differ from the rapacious, racist old "randlords" of Johannesburg? That's a question that no South African film has yet posed (2008: online resource)

7.3 Jerusalema and the NFVF

Botha states that by "11 September 2008 *Jerusalema* has made R1.2 million at the South African box office. It is one of the few South African films, apart from the Leon Schuster comedies, to reach the R1 million mark" (2012: 191). The film was shot on a very-low budget with Ziman declaring cheekily that some of his earlier music videos had bigger budgets (Le Cordeur, 2008: online resource). Yet the production quality was still very high, NFVF CEO Eddie Mbalo is on record as saying that "the film's high production values attest to the ability of the South African film industry to meet global standards of quality in filmmaking, while retaining a distinct South African flavour that has universal appeal" (In "Jerusalema submitted for...", 2008: online resource).

Ziman was bitter at the lack of support the film received from the NFVF, he said that "even though we made a film that has an all-South African cast and crew, they refused to help [financially]" (in Le Cordeur, 2008: online resource). Mbalo responded to this view thusly:

We did give them reasons why we wouldn't support them, but it came down to the fact that they didn't need the money. We promote the development of film and try to support those needing finance. They [*Jerusalema* filmmakers] should be happy they didn't get government support, because now that money will go to the less fortunate filmmakers, I don't think developed filmmakers should join the begging bowl queue; let us use state funds to get new filmmakers (ibid.).

This seems to be a slightly obscurantist excuse from Mbalo, as the likely reason the NFVF balked at the idea of providing funding for the film was the fact that *Jerusalema* raised very uncomfortable questions about the neo-liberal foundations upon which the post-apartheid state is built. It also represented a vision of contemporary South Africa that was not aspirational in the rainbowist sense. In an interview located on the DVD version of *Jerusalema*, Ziman said:

We definitely aren't making an infomercial for the South African Tourist Board. And, you know, perhaps people aren't going to like that, but this is an everyday fact of life in Johannesburg, and we just wanted to portray what we saw (Cited in Lehman, 2011: 126)

The representations located within the film definitely dampened the film's chances of getting NFVF funding. In the oft mentioned interview that Treffry-Goatley conducted with Haidarian and Mbalo about the Sediba system, Haidarian spoke of the NFVF only intervening when a script contained a negative portrayal (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 314). He gave an example of reading a good script albeit one that "made one think that one's gardener is a crazy killer" and that this representation might result in people being as afraid of their gardeners as the film *Jaws* (1975) had made audiences afraid of Sharks (Treffry-Goatley, 2010: 314). In this respect, the representation of Nazareth alone might have been enough to make the NFVF reject *Jerusalema's* funding application. If one follows Haidarian's logic, the act of seeing one negative example of an Umkhonto We Sizwe veteran might make members of the public suspicious of veterans in general. As things stood at the time, the Umkhonto We Sizwe Military Veterans Association did not take kindly to the representation of an MK veteran in such a negative light and there might have been an even greater outcry had the state funded the film (Govender, 2011: 83).

The fact that a film foundation responsible for administering state finance did not choose to fund a film that was immensely critical of the state raises a number of questions. The most-pertinent of which was whether the idea of selling the rainbow nation ideal to foreign investors and filmmakers was a higher priority than funding a project that would resonate more with local audiences, but at the time portray the country in a negative light.

7.4 Dollars and White Pipes: A Gangster Film for the Rainbow Nation

An interesting point of comparison is Donavan Marsh's 2005 film *Dollars and White Pipes*. The film's producer Anant Singh is quoted as saying that:

Dollars and White Pipes is an original South African story. It deals with important social issues, while at the same time being very entertaining ... Bernard's life story is inspirational, incredibly motivating and very uplifting. He is a positive role model for all South Africans... (In "Videovision Entertainment Begins...", 2005: online resource).

Dollars and White Pipes is quite depoliticised in comparison to *Jerusalema*, the film is based upon the real-life story of Bernard Baatjies, an ambitious young man who lives in Hannover Park

on the Cape Flats near the photogenic South African city of Cape Town (Marx, 2010: 264). The Cape Flats is a windy and barren patch of land; a place where thousands of people were forcibly relocated after the apartheid regime classified them as belonging to the "coloured" racial group and the Cape Town CBD as a place where only "whites" could live (ibid.). The film appears to be set in the mid-to-late 1980s, a time in which small surface reforms were taking place in South African society, but nothing was being done to challenge the underlying structure of apartheid (Tomaselli, 1989: 9).

Bernard's opening narration, which is somewhat reminiscent of Henry Hill's in Martin Scorsese's 1990 film *Goodfellas*, highlights the cycle of violence and boredom which characterises life in Hannover Park (Marx, 2010: 264). Bernard takes as his role model JR Ewing from the American television show *Dallas* which Marx argues is an "overt comment on the power of American cultural and ideological ascendancy" in South Africa (2010: 265). After Bernard gets into trouble while trying to get money to buy Mandrax (Quaaludes), he is essentially exiled by his parents. He sets off for Cape Town and meets a trusting idiot-savant, Cecil, on the train (ibid.). In Cape Town he deploys a "mix of smarm, chutzpah and a disturbing ability to exploit Cecil" and eventually he ends up running a popular Cape Town nightclub (ibid.). However Marx notes that:

The protection racket, run by the gangster, Mr Kuyser, whom Bernie dubs the "coloured JR," finally forces him out of the Cape Town nightclub business. He does, however, recover his sense of moral priorities, saves Cecil at the risk of his own life and, we are told in the final title, makes his way to Johannesburg where he runs a restaurant. Egoli, the "city of gold," lives up to its name for Bernard (ibid.)

Dollars and White Pipes is very much a gangster film more in line with a rainbowist discourse as it shows the problems of South African society as occurring in the apartheid past with no heed paid to the problems that continue to exist into the present. Furthermore, Bernard's drug use and his brief forays into the "anti-systematic behaviour" of the kind De Villiers references are historically contextualised within the pre-1994 period. The end titles imply that the real-life Bernard was able to become successful through legal means in the new South Africa.

However, the film also has a problematic undertone in that while the real Bernard Baatjies might have found his pot of gold through running a restaurant in Johannesburg, the unspoken

implication is that to achieve success one possibly needs to leave their current environment. Thus while Bernard's story might indeed be "inspirational" as Anant Singh calls it, there is also nothing in the film to suggest that the problems of the Hannover park community can be solved or whether things even improved for them post-1994. The film's message in this sense, could be that a prospective viewer should embrace the South African dream, work hard and avoid anti-systematic behaviour but not look too carefully at whether Bernard's type of success can be genuinely emulated in the current socio-economic system.

By contrast, the end of *Jerusalema* sees Lucky escaping police custody in a relatively triumphant fashion, the character subsequently avoids the trope of the death of the gangster which is usually seen in the genre (Govender, 2011: 96). The fact Lucky survives at the end, can be seen to place *Jerusalema* in the broader context of African Crime Fiction which Tcheuyap wrote about. Tcheuyap argues that in many post-colonial African texts the state is seen as having lost its "entitlement to kill and deliver justice" because the *commandement*, a type of social contract between the state and the people, had been broken (2011: 107). In *Jerusalema*, the fact that the state's power is manifested in the reactionary character of Blakkie Swart, as well as the fact that Lucky did everything right and yet the new dispensation never kept its promises to people like him allows one to think that perhaps the state hasn't yet earned the right to kill him (Govender, 2011: 97-98).

8. Conclusion

The topic for this dissertation was inspired by a number of initial questions regarding the state of the South African film industry. The primary question that runs throughout this dissertation is why is it that in post-apartheid South Africa, a democratic society in which artistic freedom is constitutionally guaranteed, does the film industry appear to privilege certain types of cinematic narratives while subtly silencing others?

Furthermore, one of the many sub-questions that this dissertation sought to explore in relation to this larger question was whether it was possible to speak of the South African film industry as one that unofficially subscribes to some variation of the concept known as "Rainbowism". Rainbowism was loosely defined in this dissertation as an invocation of the rainbow nation identity myth as an expression of collective South African unity whilst silencing debates on race and the continuing legacy of the apartheid past. The somewhat loose topic for this dissertation also acted as a prism that allowed for the exploration of many different aspect of the post-apartheid film industry.

In this respect, if one accepts that Rainbowism has had an influence on post-apartheid South African cinema then the obvious question is to what extent? What effects might South African government policy and funding bodies such as the NFVF have had in relation to themes and genre in post-apartheid cinematic texts? Other questions that emerge in this context would be to what extent Rainbowism can be seen as intersecting or overlapping with other South African film phenomena that emerged as a result of the intensive fragmentation of the industry under apartheid?

In this sense, can a lack of audience development be responsible for the silencing of certain cinematic narratives in the South African context? A further question would be whether Rainbowism can be seen as a method of self-preservation for the South African industry in the face of the domination of Hollywood films at the global and local box office? And the final pertinent research question would be how are South African filmmakers cinematically responding to Rainbowism?

Keeping these various questions in mind, this dissertation sought answers from a variety of sources. While South Africa does indeed have a constitution that guarantees artistic freedom and the freedom of expression, the South African film industry has almost always sought a means of making profit ahead of making art. A situation that was made abundantly clear in the historical contextualisation found in Chapter 4. Therefore, the fact that certain types of narratives are favoured whilst others are subtly silenced is unfortunately not a new phenomenon. The major issue in this regard is the post-apartheid state's reticence in providing a sorely-needed mechanism that will allow for the funding of motion pictures for the sake of culture in itself as opposed to the potential for profit.

This dissertation has shown that it is possible to speak of the South African film industry as one that unofficially subscribes to a variation of the concept known as Rainbowism. The effect that Rainbowism has had on the South African film industry has been varied and nuanced in many cases. This dissertation has focussed specifically on the potential for Rainbowism to make the creation of critical or more artistic films quite difficult, especially those that deal with the past in uncomfortable ways. The potential for Rainbowism to obfuscate the effects of the past on the present has also resulted in filmmakers making films to counter some aspects of Rainbowism, as shown in the case studies in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

Many South African audiences are either unwilling or uninterested in watching films that denaturalise Rainbowism after seeing it reified in film and television for nearly two decades. While the success of *Jerusalema* is an obvious exception, on the whole South African audiences prefer to go to see South African comedy films that do not challenge the underlying construction of the rainbow nation. These audiences also flock to see the products that the Hollywood studios frequently release. It was shown in the above chapters that the NFVF's attempts to realign itself with the neo-liberal economic frameworks of GEAR has resulted in a funding environment that is not conducive to a South African cinema that does not in some way try to mimic what makes Hollywood product successful. The NFVF's focus upon catering to the whims of existing audiences and the production-for-export market has also caused problems for filmmakers, especially in terms of the Sediba scriptwriting course which the NFVF has been running since

around 2005. The Sediba system has also created stronger links between the NFVF and the IDC, as the NFVF's recent focus upon funding films that mimic the Hollywood style can be seen as an attempt to attract international players to come and work in the South African service industry.

In this regard, Rainbowism has had a major effect on the co-productions that have emerged out of this context. Many South African stories about the TRC and the apartheid past have been made with international partners in order to utilise the "transformational capital" and prestige that the "South African miracle" of 1994 brought the country. In this respect, the fact that the story of the rainbow nation is being commoditised and used to attract international attention causes further problems for filmmakers. The reason being that those who wish to engage with the apartheid past in ways that do not include the popular conventions of Rainbowism would find it harder to get funding. It was also shown that while low budget and digital filmmaking has increased participation in the industry, there is no guarantee that these will provide a platform for a more critical or artistic type of cinema.

While Rainbowism may have been the best way to bind South Africa's diverse peoples together after apartheid had spent decades dividing them. The fact remains that it has also prevented filmmakers from looking beneath the surface of South African society to a certain extent. Furthermore, while the IDC and the broader service industry are creating employment for South Africans, the fact remains that South Africa's constitution cannot be seen to be properly upheld if the right to freedom of expression can only be enacted in ways that are conducive to the making of money.

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